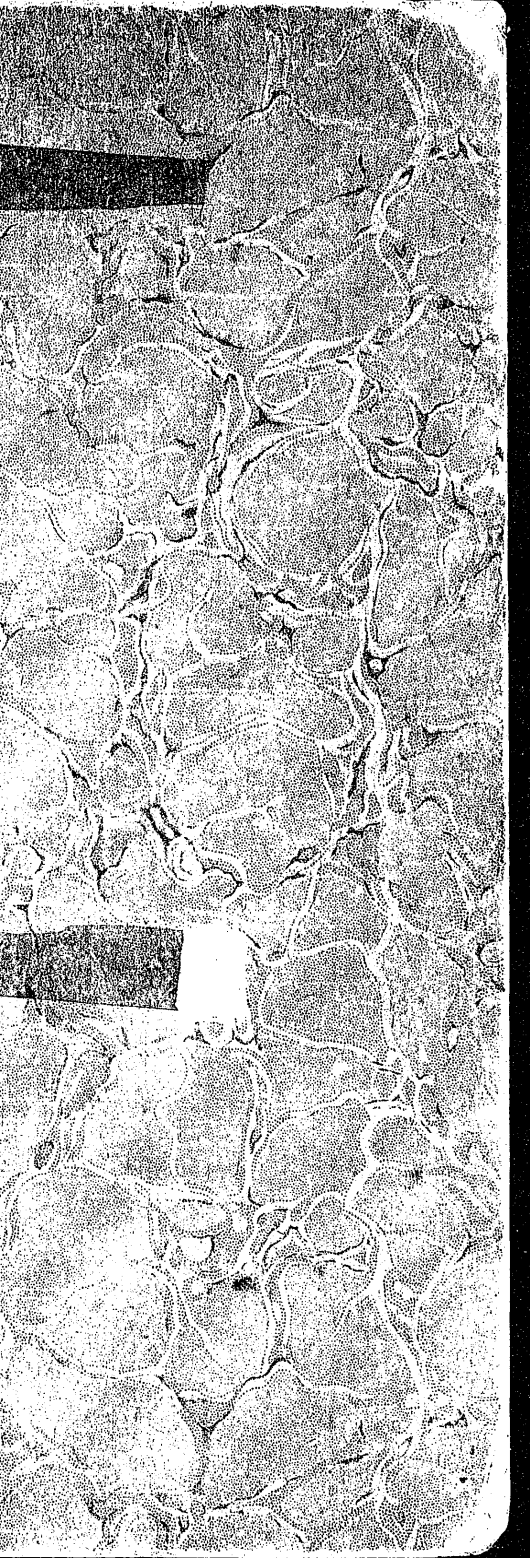


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THE FIRST
TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

By
MARY S. SIMS

THE TWENTY-FIFTH

Being a summary of the work of
Christian Associations of the
1906-1907

By

MARY S.

*Author of "The Place of the Y.W.C.A.
for Interpretation to
National Boards"*

193

THE WOMAN
600 Lexington
New York

THE FIRST FIFTEEN YEARS

of the work of the Young Women's
Associations of the United States of America
1906-1931

By

MARY S. SIMS

*"President of the Y.W.C.A. in Cities" and Secretary
of Interpretation to the Public of the
National Board, Y.W.C.A.*

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THE PRESIDENTS AND GENERAL SECRETARIES OF
THE NATIONAL BOARD FROM 1906-1932

Presidents

1906-1914 MISS GRACE H. DODGE
1914-1932 MRS. ROBERT E. SPEER
1932-..... MRS. FREDERIC M. PAIST

General Secretaries

1906-1928 MISS MABEL CRATTY
1929-..... MISS ANNA V. RICE

Associate General Secretaries

1922-1930 MISS HELEN A. DAVIS
1929-..... MISS EMMA P. HIRTH

Chapter I

The Association Idea—1906

The Young Women's Christian Association, which has been projecting itself from several national bases into all parts of the world, is essentially, I take it, a fellowship of women and girls for the development of personality in accord with a character pattern based on New Testament ideals, and especially upon the life and teachings of Jesus. Its genius is in the realm of ethical expression and of the development of personality through social influence. This is what the "Association idea" implies.—F. ERNEST JOHNSON in The International Survey of the Foreign Work of the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A.

FOR FORTY years a powerful leaven had been working in the United States, a leaven compounded of the practical realism of women, their changing situation and needs, the eager idealism of Christian leaders, the boundless courage and enthusiasm of youth, and the "Association idea."

This Association idea, starting first among young men, arose and grew with great spontaneity in the middle of the nineteenth century. It is difficult to decide from existing records whether credit for the beginnings should go to Germany, to Switzerland, or to England. Young men came together for Bible study and fellowship in Germany and Switzerland some years before such gatherings, directly resulting in the organization of Y.M.C.A.'s, can be traced in England. While in all three countries much of the vitality of the movement came from the renewed strength of the evangelical churches, nevertheless, of the three the beginnings in England were least closely connected with the church and professional church leadership and more permeated with that interdenominational character which has come to be considered basic to the "Association idea." From England also came the earnest attempts to apply Christian standards to prob-

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lems of daily life and behavior. An unusual element in the situation lay in the fact that such an idea, so vital a part of the Christian life, could be promoted by an organization outside the churches.

While all this was happening to young men, an individual here and there began to realize that women and girls too were in need of "opportunities for recreation, instruction and Christian companionship." The beginnings of this awareness of the needs of women were also in Germany and England; in Germany, closely related to the State church, as was the men's work; in England, more general in their religious impetus and more directly led by women.

In England there were two quite separate beginnings to what eventually became the Young Women's Christian Association—the Prayer Union, started quite simply by Miss Emma Roberts in 1855 among her own friends "for their mutual benefit and for that of any young women in their respective spheres whom they might be enabled to influence for good"; and the General Female Training Institute, founded also in 1855 in London, by the Hon. Mrs. Arthur Kinnaird, and originally a home for nurses returning from the Crimean War.

Both these organizations spread rapidly to other parts of England through the contagious enthusiasm of their leadership and the acceptableness to young women of the objectives of the movements. In 1877 the Hon. Mrs. Kinnaird and Miss Roberts met informally for the first time at the offices of the Prayer Union and decided to bring the two organizations together under the name of the Young Women's Christian Association. Miss Roberts explained the adoption of this name "simply as the feminine of Young Men's, which had already become known to many of the same friends." Evidently no greater formality was needed to bring about this union than the common agreement of the two leaders over a cup of tea.

Miss Roberts died soon after this plan was made, and when the reorganization was completed, Mrs. Kinnaird became vice-president of the London division and Mrs. Pennefather, of the Prayer Union group, became vice-president of a country and foreign division with the Earl of Shaftesbury as president.

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In the United States the beginnings of the Association movement for women came still later. By the eighteen-fifties some observant persons began to realize that "woman's place in the home" was, through the developments of the industrial revolution, rapidly diminishing in scope and power. No longer could the paternal or fraternal homestead absorb productively the labors of an indefinite number of "females." Not only had most of the processes connected with the making of clothing—spinning, weaving, dyeing, dressmaking and tailoring—become factory work through the introduction of machinery, but many of the tasks connected with day to day living, such as laundry work and some forms of cooking, were also becoming factory processes. Historically these were women's tasks, and quite naturally she followed them to the factory, the bakery, and the laundry, all the more certainly if she happened to be unmarried or a young widow, as was often the case in the years of the Civil War. Even in those early years of industry, when almost no one was aware of or sensitive to the many abuses of the factory system (because few realized the difference between working long hours in the home and working even longer hours amid the noise and demanding pressure of machinery), there were a few persons who perceived the necessity for changing and controlling those conditions, or at least for mitigating their evil effects.

The first Young Women's Christian Association in the United States was formed in Boston in 1866. A city missionary, greatly distressed by the serious situation that confronted self-supporting girls, came to a group of church women and, setting before them facts from her diary extending over several years, asked, "Cannot something be done by benevolent ladies that shall remain a permanent institution?"

In spite of the eagerness of these "benevolent ladies" to do something, the necessity for doing it was not recognized by Boston men, particularly by the pastors of the Boston churches, and their efforts were discouraged. Several years went by before organization was actually accomplished. On March 3, 1866, thirty ladies met at the home of Mrs. Henry F. Durant and adopted a constitution under

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the name of the Boston Young Women's Christian Association. Its object was "the temporal, moral and religious welfare of young women who are dependent on their own exertions for support."

This Boston Young Women's Christian Association, like the earlier "institutes" and "unions" in England, grew out of the needs of young women. The rural civilization of New England was rapidly changing. The home, in the sense of a self-sustaining community, was breaking up. In a world in which many women and girls were self-supporting and without home ties it was natural to turn for help to Christian women who were church leaders, not only because they represented one of the few groups of women who had an active interest in affairs outside their own homes, but also because in those days the business of providing a home carried with it the obligation of religious influence as well as of care and protection.

After this beginning, Young Women's Christian Associations sprang up in city after city. One of the most interesting characteristics of the Association has been its capacity for propagating itself without direct promotion and with great rapidity. Its history is an example of the attraction of an idea and of the dynamic of person to person contact. As the number of Y.W.C.A.'s grew, other groups, organized for similar purposes, changed their names in order to become a part of this ongoing movement which was capturing the imagination of women in so many places. This same ongoing quality has persisted through the years. Associations are still springing up because some one or two persons in a community have known the Y. W. C. A. in another place, and nearly every year one or more groups organized under other names or for other purposes are asking to become Y. W. C. A.'s.

The new Boston Association quickly established itself in rooms, comfortably furnished and provided with books and magazines and a "loaned piano." A general secretary was also engaged, of "attractive personality and lovable disposition." It is interesting to note that thus early in Association history many of the present programs had their beginning. The general secretary helped girls to find jobs

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and places to live; luncheons were served in the Association rooms, and recreation and educational classes were provided. The Board of Managers met weekly.

Starting first in the cities, where the needs of girls who were going into industry for the first time were very evident, the Association spread to other types of communities and to other groups. The objectives of a vital Christian life for each individual, and group effort toward making such a life possible for all, were greatly appealing to youth. In 1873 the first student Y. W. C. A. was organized in Normal University, Normal, Illinois, and from then on student Associations have played a large part in the growing dynamic of this Christian fellowship.

In 1881 Oakland, California, began to work with girls still in school, and called this work the Little Girls' Christian Association. In 1884 the first country Association was started in Pleasant Valley, Iowa.

Meanwhile the impulse toward solidarity among these separate expressions of the Association idea increased. In 1884 state Associations were formed in Michigan, Ohio and Iowa. In 1886 the first national organization, The American Committee, was organized by representatives of the middle-western Associations. In 1891 the Associations in the east, which had been coming together in a biennial convention since 1871, formed another national organization, the International Board of Women's and Young Women's Christian Associations.

These two national organizations had somewhat different emphases in their objectives and in their programs. The American Committee included student as well as city Associations and was concerned to build unity of religious interest by limiting membership to those Associations using an evangelical basis, a phrase which at that time was interpreted to mean membership in a Protestant evangelical church. Undoubtedly it was these factors of youth and youthful eagerness to tell the "good news", as well as the general interest of church people in "missions" which influenced The Amer-

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ican Committee to extend the Y. W. C. A. to other lands soon after it was formed.

The International Board was less concerned about the actual constitutional basis of the Associations which it combined; rather, it relied upon unity in facing the needs of young women and unity of effort in attempting to meet them, to produce the oneness of spirit necessary to its continuity. Including in its membership most of the large industrial cities of the east and middle-west, it is not surprising that the program of this group contained a strong emphasis on service, particularly on travelers' aid work.

The story of the slow coming together of these two groups into one strong powerful national organization is a long one and has been ably told elsewhere. As is often the case, the stimuli toward union were both immediate concrete issues and deep conviction as to the value of unity. Local communities were confused and baffled by the existence of two national organizations with local affiliations that were so alike in many ways, including the name, and so different at other points. At the same time far-sighted leaders were glimpsing the possibilities that might be realized by one organization of women united on a Christian basis and committed to the attempt to make possible "the abundant life" for women and girls everywhere. After much preliminary consultation, the conference of the International Board in November 1905 at Baltimore and the convention of The American Committee in Chicago in January 1906, voted to make the attempt to unite the two existing national movements.

A joint committee of fifteen representatives of the two organizations, under the chairmanship of Miss Grace H. Dodge of New York, was organized. This committee prepared material and exhibits which were sent out to the field, so that when the first convention of the two organizations was called for December 5 and 6, 1906, in New York City, there was general understanding of the nature, the privileges, and the obligations which would be assumed by a new body. The Associations had been asked to make application for charter membership previous to the convening of the convention, and interest in the new organization was so great and belief in its possi-

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bilities so firm that at the beginning of the convention there were 147 city and 469 student Associations that had applied for membership. This list included all but three of the city Associations of The American Committee and most of their student Associations and almost all the Associations affiliated with the International Board which carried on an all-round program.

At this first convention, 392 delegates from 132 different Associations received the final report of the joint committee and started the new movement. Miss Dodge was elected president of the convention at its first session.

This new organization was called the Young Women's Christian Associations of the United States of America, and its object was stated as follows:

The object of this organization shall be to unite in one body the Young Women's Christian Associations of the United States; to establish, develop and unify such Associations; to advance the physical, social, intellectual, moral and spiritual interests of young women; to participate in the work of the World's Young Women's Christian Association.

A National Board of thirty members was elected as the executive body of the organization, to carry on its work between conventions, and was incorporated under the laws of the State of New York on June 7, 1907. Miss Dodge was elected president at the first meeting of the National Board immediately following the convention. During the next months details of organization were worked out, a staff was called, and offices were opened in New York City.

This new unity in Young Women's Christian Association work marked both the beginning and the end of important eras in its history in the United States.

Chapter II

Building for the Future—1906-1917

It is not very hard to be a pilgrim. You can be one by yourself. But building is always a team-work process. No builder can work alone, but must always be a member of a crew. It is hard to be a builder. To take day by day a mass of inchoate ideas, suggestions, counter suggestions, work them first into a plan, then into a program incarnate in flesh and blood—this means that virtue will go out of us.

—MABEL CRATTY.

THE NEW national organization was a bringing together of the two main tendencies in Associations in this country—the strong fellowship and fervently evangelical tendency of The American Committee and the more institutionalized service aspect of the International Board.

Opposing as these two tendencies may have seemed, both at that time and in later years, nevertheless they are really complementary, and much of the vitality and power of the present national movement can be traced to their interaction.

The newly elected National Board faced heavy and immediate problems. Unlike many national agencies whose organization has preceded the forming of local branches, this new national body found itself composed of 608 affiliated Associations with a membership of 186,330 women and girls. Of these Associations 469 were student with a membership of 41,688. In addition, the new organization took over the responsibility of The American Committee for the work of eleven secretaries in four other countries—China, India, Argentina, and Japan.

Even though the first decade of this century was half over it was still unusual for women to assume heavy organizational responsibilities. Their ability to raise money and administer budgets was still questioned by women themselves as well as by men. Moreover, na-

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tional and world organizations were far less common than twenty years later. The United States was highly sectionalized in feeling and the conception that the whole country, east and west, north and south, could and would work together for common ends was daring and revolutionary. Few of the Protestant church denominational bodies ever had conceived it possible to unite in one national organization the churches of the north and the south, and that Unitarian New England could and would work with the rapidly developing but highly conservative southwest on a religious program for women and girls was almost inconceivable.

As we think over these situations a quarter of a century ago we are more than ever struck with the great daring of those women who in December of 1906 assumed the responsibility for guiding and directing the destinies of the united movement.

Certainly in those early days it was Miss Grace Dodge, the first president of the National Board, who not only made the union of the two earlier national movements possible but had the vision and the courage to start out on the road toward the realization of some of the opportunities which were opening before this young, vital movement. At no one point, perhaps, was her mature judgment more clearly shown than in her recognition of the fact that such a piece of work could not immediately find financial support, on a sufficiently large scale, from the local Associations which made it up, and that it would need for a period of time—Miss Dodge thought twenty years—to be underwritten. She lived to do this for less than half the twenty years but those years made it possible for the national organization to establish itself as a dignified and useful instrument for the unifying of the Association movement in America.

At the same time, this new national organization had to take on world concerns. The World's Young Women's Christian Association had been organized in 1894 and The American Committee interest in it had been strong. Moreover the general secretary of the World's Association, Miss Annie Reynolds, was an American and a former secretary of the International Board. Quite naturally the new national body felt responsible for its part in the World's business, but

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in the beginning and for ten years more this was expressed largely in terms of the work carried on by the American Foreign Department in cooperation with the World's Committee.

From the beginning the leadership, both lay and employed, was committed to the belief that dynamic, in terms of spiritual power, and structure were both essential. Careful plans were made for training secretaries, building on the past experience of The American Committee in Chicago. In those early days of this century women were still self-conscious about a college education. Such training for life and work was only just beginning to be accepted, and the number of women who had this opportunity were few. Training for social work of any kind was even more at its beginnings, and the newly organized training school faced all the difficulties of any pioneering professional school. The question of standards for admission was puzzling. There was hesitancy to declare frankly the requirement of a bachelor's degree for entering the professional group. There was the next question of an essential curriculum, and the problem of identifying Association techniques as well as planning for their teaching. To make and begin to carry out such plans was hard, slow work.

Next to emphasis on the development of the trained professional secretary probably no one factor helped more to stabilize the movement as a whole than did the erection of Y.W.C.A. buildings in all the larger cities and many of the smaller ones of this country. Association buildings date far back, of course, but it was not until after the organization of the present national movement that there was a widespread idea that in any city of appreciable size the Y.W.C.A. should have its own building and, if possible, a building erected for its particular purposes.

This main — or central, as it is frequently called — Association building is usually for administrative purposes and general activities, providing for a great middle-class group of women and girls facilities similar to those of a woman's club and often serving at the same time as a headquarters for many women's groups and interests.

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Some Associations combine housing in one building with these other facilities, others have separate buildings.

One settled conviction in the public mind about the Young Women's Christian Association is that it does and should house girls, consequently this work could not be neglected. Long and hard has been the struggle to organize residences on a self-supporting or, in the case of the larger units, on an income-producing basis, and to manage them in such a way that girls can be housed economically and happily. Much effort was needed also to change the name of the housing unit from Y.W.C.A. "home" to Y.W.C.A. "residence", changing at the same time its connotation, which by the first decade of the century was that of a poorly run boarding house with many rules. As a result of this twofold effort the Y.W.C.A. residence is today in most cities looked upon as a highly desirable place to live, and the Association itself is realizing its opportunity to influence the girls who live under its roof in their attitudes toward home making, group living, and good citizenship.

Even in those years of enthusiastic acquisition of property—and it was exciting, for women's groups in the past had had little opportunity to feel the thrill of ownership—there was a recognition of the danger of confusing this outward expression of the Association with its essential reality in terms of membership. Such phrases as the "membership is the Association" were in constant use, and warnings of the possibility of too great sacrifices—in terms of energy or even in terms of freedom of speech and action—for the sake of buildings were frequently heard. In the smaller communities, cities and towns as well as rural districts, the development of program irrespective of equipment was constantly stressed, together with the differentiation at this point between larger and smaller places.

The result of the emphasis on trained secretaries and suitable, paid-for buildings began to be felt after a few years, and by 1917, the end of this first period of growth, had greatly stabilized the Association both nationally (in 1912 a national headquarters was dedicated at 600 Lexington Avenue, New York City) and locally; had made it visible in bricks and mortar in more than two hundred cities and

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respected for its competent leadership by groups of social agencies and religious organizations.

This period was marked also by recognition of the need for highly specialized services. The general Association worker who was a jack-of-all-trades with corresponding limitations, was passing, and the trained worker with specialized academic equipment and experience was coming into prominence. We find physical directors, religious education secretaries, cafeteria directors, educational secretaries, employment bureau secretaries, room registry secretaries, case workers, and many other specialists on the rosters of local Associations, as well as increasing numbers of persons skilled in work with some particular class of girls—adolescents, girls in industry, and the foreign speaking.

So acute was a consciousness of the need to make a specialized approach to different groups of women and girls in the community that the work of these specialists was protected and emphasized by a departmental form of organization. Only in some such way, probably, could it have been possible to break through the conventional general approach of offering to women and girls, in a central location, facilities and activities on the basis of subject interests such as physical education, general education, and recreation. This general approach had resulted as the years went on in a homogeneous constituency of the middle-of-the-road variety.

In the Association, as elsewhere, it was now more than evident that the most different groups—such as industrial girls, Negroes, the foreign-born—would not be reached by the Association without special efforts related to their own life experiences and cultural backgrounds. The struggle, early deemed important, to make of the Association a true cross-section movement of all the kinds of women and girls in the community, the nation, and the world, still goes on. Heterogeneity does not just happen; on a constructive basis of active comradeship it is a conscious and continuous process.

The tendency to identify the rigidity of departmental organization with the use of specialized personnel and programs is ever with the Association, but as appreciation of the newer methods of learning

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through experience grows, so does understanding of the necessity for recognition of real differences in life experience, if leadership growth is to take place in the different types of girls and women to whom the Association belongs.

In this period were the beginnings of methods of working with groups, methods that have proved their validity through their permanence. In 1908 the first federation of industrial clubs was organized in Detroit. This was a plan of work directed toward meeting the problems of industrial girls and helping them to develop leadership within their own groups through the use of self-governing clubs. In 1910 the first International Institute, a specialized service for the protection and welfare of immigrant girls, was organized in New York City. This plan of work was characterized by the use of workers who spoke the languages of the major foreign groups and who had the training that enabled them to help to adjust to American life girls and women strange not only to the language but to the customs and conventions of the new land. Another group in which the Association early showed interest was the American Indian girls, particularly those in Indian schools. Some student work in these schools was begun in 1892 but it was not until 1909 that a special secretary for Indian student work was appointed to the national staff. An important part of this work also was the adjusting of the Indian woman and girl to the wider life that came with the opening of the reservations.

Negro women and girls have always been within the fellowship of the Association. Here also the work had its beginnings in the Negro schools and spread outward to communities. Before the completion of the organization of the present national movement a study had been made of Negro schools and a secretary for this work was immediately placed on the new national staff. It was not, however, until 1914 that a secretary for Negro work in cities was added.

In 1906 the Executive Committee of the World's Young Women's Christian Association decided that the place of the Young Women's Christian Association in social and industrial life should be a major topic of discussion at the World's conference to be held in Berlin in

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1910. Miss Florence Simms, national industrial secretary for the Y.W.C.A. of the United States, was asked to be chairman of an international commission to make a study of this subject. This commission's report was called by Miss Simms the "charter" of the industrial work of the Association. The resolutions as passed by the World's Committee recognized the social significance of the teachings of Jesus and urged upon all national Associations the study of the social problems of the day, especially as they affected young women.

These resolutions were sent to each national Association belonging to the World's Association. Each was invited to adopt them as a statement of its own policy. As a result of this action resolutions were brought by the Committee on the National Board's Report to the biennial convention held at Indianapolis in 1911. These resolutions were as follows:

XII. Inasmuch as the utterly inadequate wages paid to thousands of young women throughout the country often hamper the work of the Association as a great preventive agency, and as the white slave traffic is admitted to be closely related to the lack of living wage, the Association recognizes its responsibility as an influential unit in the body of Christian public opinion, and accordingly it is recommended:

a. That the Association shall seek to educate public opinion regarding the need of establishing a minimum living wage and of regulating the hours of labor compatible with the physical health and development of wage earners.

b. That the Association shall declare its belief in the right of a woman over sixteen years of age in good health, working a full day, to a living wage which shall insure her the possibility of a virtuous livelihood.

c. That the Association, recognizing the necessity of legislation for the regulation of hours and wages of wage-earners in industry and trade hereby expresses its sympathy with the great purpose of securing the determination by law of a minimum living wage for women.

d. That the Association, while endeavoring to improve the industrial condition of the working girl shall point steadfastly to a higher standard of faithful service and achievement for the worker and of justice and consideration for the employer.

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XIII. That, in order to make more far-reaching the contact of the Young Women's Christian Association with women in industry, the extension of Association work into factories through noon meetings, classes, and informal clubs be continued; and that wherever possible, in preference to organizing Associations within factory walls, the establishment of rented centers in the industrial sections of cities be advocated and employers be encouraged to contribute to the funds of the central Association, which shall employ the secretaries in charge of this work.

It is probably true that the significance of this action was not fully realized by the convention. Women had not been given the suffrage and the possibilities of social legislation in this country were only vaguely comprehended. It was, however, in the light of these recommendations that industrial work in the local Associations was promoted by the national organization.

It will be remembered that the first Associations in this country were organized in cities. Then, only a few years afterward, the movement spread to student centers. It was some time, however, before there was a satisfactory development of the Association idea in smaller communities. Associations were organized from time to time in rural districts but usually with the characteristics of city or student work. Probably one of the most interesting forerunners of the present rural work of the Young Women's Christian Association came through the Eight-Week Club plan, by which college girls going home for the summer vacation organized summer clubs of girls in their communities.

At the convention in 1915 the large town unit of affiliation was recognized, roughly determined as a community with a population of between 5,000 and 15,000. This action was taken in the well grounded belief that not until attention was focused on this type of community would there develop the kind of Association movement which could successfully be administered in such communities.

Thus at the completion of ten years of work the national organization found itself with some fairly satisfactory method of approach to nearly all the different kinds of groups of women and girls in this country and with plans for further work which, though largely in

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their beginnings, nevertheless showed promise of success. The two outstanding problems for which no constructive solution seemed in sight were the question of what membership in the Association really meant, and what particular place in the Association fellowship the rapidly increasing numbers of business and professional girls and women should occupy.

During this same period of development there had been growing a general feeling that more should be done to make the membership practice of the Young Women's Christian Association more realistic. From the beginning the Association had theoretically been a "membership-participating" organization, that is, final authority rested in the voting membership, and the board of directors, elected by those members, held delegated power only, for the management of the affairs of the Association. Practically speaking, however, in many communities this board of directors was nearly, if not quite, self-perpetuating and the privilege of voting was almost completely ignored or forgotten.

Part of the difficulty quite evidently, in many places, grew out of the artificiality of the so-called church membership basis. Voting membership was determined entirely by membership in churches in or eligible to the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America rather than by any test of belief in the purpose of the Association itself. The differences developing between church bodies, the organization of community churches that were of no particular denomination, and the increasing number of foreign-born girls and women in this country who were members of churches not eligible to the Federal Council made the question of differentiation between voting and non-voting members difficult. Chiefly this difficulty was met by ignoring the question and either allowing everyone who happened to be at the annual meeting to vote by acclamation or having a very quiet election in the morning with hardly anyone besides the board of directors itself voting. This was in the days before women had received the suffrage in this country and, moreover, when the trend toward self-government was much less important and less active.

At the biennial convention in Los Angeles in 1915 a recommenda-

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tion for a change in basis for student Associations was brought in by a national commission which had been appointed to study this matter. This recommendation provided for any student Associations desiring it an alternate "personal" basis; that is, it substituted for the requirement of church membership a statement of personal commitment to the purpose of the Y. W. C. A. After prolonged discussion this recommendation was passed. As the national constitution at that time provided that changes in membership bases must be presented to and approved by two successive conventions, this method of administering membership could not be put into effect until passed by another convention. In the meantime came the World War.

When the present national organization was formed in 1906 it took over the program of foreign work being carried under The American Committee. Interest in this program constantly increased, and by 1917 the American Young Women's Christian Association was supporting forty-seven secretaries in five countries. In addition to this large piece of work directly administered by the national organization, two other pieces of national work had been undertaken. In 1915 the national organization had maintained a headquarters and club house on the Panama-Pacific International Exposition Grounds at San Francisco for service to women visitors and as a means of interpreting the work of the organization. In 1916 the Hollywood Studio Club for girls employed in the motion picture industry was organized, under the Pacific Coast Field Committee, a section of the national organization.

It was inevitable that the Y.W.C.A. in this country should become interested at the start, through its work in other countries, in the whole question of international relations and of world situations. This interest has expressed itself through three main currents of work which are closely related and play into each other—membership in the World's Association by which the Associations in this country are connected with the Associations of other countries; contributions of secretarial staff and funds to Associations in less developed countries; and education and citizenship work for international

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relations and world peace. In 1915 the first convention action of the Young Women's Christian Associations concerning world peace appears in the records. The national convention of that year, the last one to meet until 1920, expressed its desire for "peace when it can be had with righteousness," and wired President Wilson its hope that this country might "take an active part in bringing about a world-wide cessation of war." Less than two years afterward the United States entered the World War.

Chapter III

Meeting an Emergency—1917-1921

In all its work the War Work Council of the Young Women's Christian Association endeavored to be of service in all ways to all women, without prejudice, in the spirit and the name of Christ. It made mistakes, for it was made up of human personalities; but it earnestly tried to be worthy of the faith and confidence of those who called upon it for service and entrusted it with money.—On behalf of the National War Work Council.

VERA SCOTT CUSHMAN, *Chairman*
HELEN ALLING DAVIS, *Executive Secretary*

October 1, 1919.

IN APRIL of 1917 the United States entered the World War. Almost immediately inquiries as to how best to serve women and girls in this time of emergency began to pour into the national headquarters. In the summer of 1916, because of the concentration of troops on the Mexican border, the national organization in cooperation with the local Associations had begun special work with girls at San Antonio and El Paso, Texas, and Douglas, Arizona. This experience stood the organization in good stead now. Moreover, as a result of years of hard work, the Young Women's Christian Association was an established organization nationally as well as locally, with work in every state and a wide experience of the needs and desires of women and girls. Representatives of the national Young Women's Christian Association were in the first groups called to Washington to face with the government the tremendous needs of those critical days. It was no small thing to be able to say that the 129 members of the national staff could be used at once in this work and that all the resources of the organization were at the disposal of the government for the benefit of women and girls.

Very soon after the declaration of war the National Board appointed a small committee which should be responsible for the war work. It was soon evident, however, that a small committee could not meet the rapidly growing demands. At a specially called

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meeting of the Field Work Department on May 15, 1917, authorization was given for the appointment of a War Work Council of the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Associations. This action was ratified by the National Board on May 23, 1917. To this body was given full responsibility for all war emergency work both in the United States and abroad. The executive of the Field Work Department was made the executive secretary of this council and all the resources of personnel and equipment of the National Board were put at its service. On June 6, 1917, this War Work Council held its first called conference to discuss the needs, to determine policy and to decide upon a budget. At that time a budget of \$1,000,000 was voted and the work of the council stated to be as follows:

The indirect service which it can give by recommending and paying the salaries of such trained Association workers as the Federal Commission on Training Camp Activities asks the National Board to provide.

Direct work in the name of the Young Women's Christian Association, under the following divisions:

Extension of work where there are Associations.

Organized work in new centers.

Unorganized work.

The purpose and the aim were to be the "aim and purpose of all Association work," and the program of activities was to be "the usual program of the Association."

Even by that time the Association had already embarked upon a considerable program of emergency service including:

"Investigation of Russian needs and possibilities.

Correspondence with French women with regard to work in France.

Club work:

Plattsburg, New York

Junction City, Kansas (Fort Riley)

Atlanta, Georgia

Hostess Houses:

Plattsburg, New York

Fort Niagara, New York"

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It was evident that the wide experience and knowledge of this organization in dealing with women and girls was needed. The first piece of work done for the government by the National Board was at the training camp for officers at Plattsburg Barracks, N. Y. This was the first time that women, other than nurses, had ever been permitted inside a United States army camp for work. Within ten days from the time when Colonel Wolfe staked out the plot the building was up and officially opened. It was hardly more than a hut, with kitchenette attachment, dressing and rest rooms, and comfortable wicker furniture, intended to provide for the needs of visitors to 5,000 men. A service and hospitality program for women was quickly under way with the enthusiastic support of the commanding officer. This concrete and definite proof of the ability of the organization to work rapidly and to provide trained leadership had, no doubt, much to do with the increased responsibility laid upon the organization by the national government.

The Young Women's Christian Association became one of the seven national organizations which mobilized their work under the United States government during the war period. During this time its war work was financed through the united war work campaigns, and the organization received instructions directly from the government.

The unique contribution of the War Work Council of the Y.W.C.A. was its emphasis on the interests of women. It was the only women's organization in this group of seven officially recognized organizations. During the entire war period it was administered by women and served as a continual reminder of their service and needs.

The work done was in line with the purpose and the program of the Association before the war. It was because of this previous experience that the Association was called upon for war service. Nothing was undertaken which was new to its policy and which would not have been done at any time if the need and the opportunity had presented. "Where it could, it used the high road, where it was necessary it blazed new trails, but always there was one objective—the needs of women and girls of this and of other coun-

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tries." The very nature of the Young Women's Christian Association keeps it inevitably at the center of problems affecting women and girls. In a time of crisis like the great war that meant a constant facing of new conditions, a close connection with the activities of the War Department of the United States government and a constant rapid mobility. As troops moved—so did women and so did the Y.W.C.A. In this country, as the needs increased, the program included work for women visitors in camps, and work in communities around camps and navy yards and in large manufacturing centers particularly affected by war conditions.

Work in the United States

Under trained leadership centers for recreation and club work were opened. In those places where there were local Y.W.C.A.'s they were helped to meet war conditions by the opening of special centers in appropriate parts of the town, by the establishment of branches for special groups of girls, or by making possible a larger staff of workers. In all, work was carried on in 198 different communities as well as in the Canal Zone and at Honolulu.

Hostess house work was developed as a service to women visitors in camps. There were 116 such centers in army training camps, 4 in naval stations, 2 in marine and 2 in hospital camps, 7 in cities which were embarkation and debarkation ports, and in addition, 7 in Hawaii and 2 in Porto Rico.

One of the most unexpected but interesting pieces of service was the care of the war brides. More than 3,000 brides and 383 children were taken care of by the Y.W.C.A. Much of this work was done at the French ports before embarkation. In addition many of the war brides traveled under the care of the Y.W.C.A. and were met by Association workers on their arrival in America.

The War Work Council, through its Housing Committee, made practical demonstration of housing for women war workers both in connection with camps and factories working on war supplies, and in Washington itself. Early in the war a pamphlet containing practical suggestions for housing women and suggested plans for tem-

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porary buildings was published by the committee and sent broadcast through the country to be used by corporations and groups of people employing women. From this experience the Y.W.C.A. learned much that has since proved useful—about simplicity of structure and how to provide attractive, cheerful furnishings inexpensively. It learned the psychological value of bright chintzes and gay furniture, in marked contrast to the genteel fawns and greys of the preceding period. At two camps, Upton and Dix, the committee built and maintained Players' Houses to care for the entertainers sent out by the Commission on Training Camp Activities.

War conditions made evident the deplorable lack of facilities for recreation and amusement for the colored girls and women in this country. In addition, large numbers of colored girls and women were entering industry for the first time. A Committee on Colored Work of the War Work Council was organized. Its first and most important task was to secure leaders and volunteer workers who could be trained for positions of responsibility. Through this committee hostess house work was carried on in 17 camps, and in 49 communities service centers for colored women and girls were organized. Work was also carried on in 8 industrial centers, 3 of which were in munition factories.

During this period of intense nationalism there was constant likelihood of a misunderstanding of foreign people. Not only was there need of interpreting their point of view to the people of America but also the necessity for helping them to understand the war-time regulations of the government. The work of the Young Women's Christian Association for foreign-born women and girls fell in the main into four parts: (1) An International Translation and Service Bureau whose function was to give every kind of service possible through the medium of print, in foreign languages. This meant translating bulletins sent out from government offices, sending articles to foreign language newspapers explaining in simple detail how the draft was working, what the Red Cross was for, and similar services. (2) Additional work in foreign communities on the same principles as those which the Association had already

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found successful in its International Institutes but with a program adapted to the emergency situation. In many instances this meant work in communities near large camps or near munition centers. (3) Home Information Service for the foreign families of enlisted men. This meant putting into camps and war-affected communities workers who were interested in foreign people, who spoke the necessary languages and who could interpret the camp situation to those at home and keep the men in the camps in touch with their homes in this country, and, if possible, in the old country. Nine camps had such hostesses speaking foreign languages.

The fourth type of work carried on for the foreign-born was the inter-country work. This involved the locating of refugees' relatives, protection at the ports, and helping foreign people in America in their efforts to be of service to their suffering countrymen both here and abroad. One part of this work was the provision of training centers where Polish-American young women might fit themselves to go back to Poland for service after the war. The women thus trained were known as the Polish Grey Samaritans and some 40 of them gave conspicuous service in this fashion. On the Mexican border work was established with incoming and outgoing Mexicans. Hospitality houses were stationed near the bridges, caring for hundreds of women and children daily.

Twenty industrial service centers were opened near munition plants or in industrial communities. The work of these centers helped to sustain the morale of industrial women by providing activities sufficiently varied to meet the need of a strangely mixed group — recreation of all kinds, clubs, opportunity for study, a center of friendliness and good will. In some places big cafeterias were maintained where food could be obtained at a reasonable price; in other places a room registry service for housing was opened. The only requirement for admission to the privileges of the center was the taking of the following pledge of service:

It is my desire to serve to the best of my capacity in the ranks of the Woman's Industrial Army. I pledge my loyalty by promoting in every way possible the spirit of service and good will in my work and community.

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In the very beginning of the war period the National Board recognized the possibility that standards of industrial and social legislation would be let down because of the pressure for production. In the National Board meeting of May 23, 1917 the following resolution was passed:

"That a telegram be sent to Governor Whitman from the National Board urging that the present labor legislation be upheld."

In the discussion preceding this resolution it was "urged that every member of the board inform herself as to the labor legislation which now exists and to stand for its being upheld."

A Commission on Social Morality already established as part of the Y.W.C.A. health program, promoted a lecture program for communities surrounding camps and other centers. In order to facilitate its presentation a tangible relation to some government agency was negotiated. This eventuated in the establishing of a section on women's work in the Social Hygiene Division of the Commission on Training Camp Activities of the War Department. Later on a Bureau of Social Education initiated a program of health education through physical examinations, lectures upon general health topics and instructions with regard to proper and wholesome food, clothes and daily living. From June 1, 1917 to July 1, 1919, 11,273 lectures by 183 lecturers were given in 1,204 communities to more than 1,500,000 women and girls.

The crowning effort of this group was the convening in October 1919 of the first international conference of women physicians. This conference was held at the national headquarters and there were present thirty women physicians from fourteen countries.

The Junior War Work Council was also organized in June 1917 to assist the War Work Council. This group concentrated its efforts largely on work with younger girls in communities near camps, particularly through the Patriotic League.

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Overseas Work

The overseas work of the Y.W.C.A. was not a deliberately planned effort but was undertaken in response to appeals from the women of both France and Russia, and only after thorough investigation and in the firm conviction that the Y.W.C.A., as a women's organization, was able to give a service for women which was greatly needed and which would in no way duplicate the work of any other agency. All other welfare organizations had men as their first objective. A women's organization was needed in order to keep intact women's point of view, and to serve women as they should be served.

The work with French women in munitions factories was done directly in cooperation with the French War Department. The work with women serving the A.E.F. was done in cooperation with the United States Army. In cooperation with the Red Cross, nurses' clubs furnishing opportunities for rest, recreation and companionship were developed in connection with the base hospitals. Of the 12,000 nurses with the American Expeditionary Forces in France it is estimated that 8,000 were served directly or indirectly through these nurses' clubs.

In response to the need not only of nurses but of all American war workers in France, the Young Women's Christian Association established a series of hostess houses, where transient women could find lodgings, permanently stationed women a home, and both men and women could procure good meals at a reasonable cost and enjoy the hospitality of an American home. Three of these houses were opened in Paris, others in the provinces, and after the Armistice, in connection with the army of occupation in Germany. All signal corps girls were housed by the Young Women's Christian Association. Later there was opened up port work for foreign war brides of American soldiers and hostess house work at the military cemeteries. Much of the other work of the American Young Women's Christian Association in France also lasted into the months following the close of the war. Its object was to carry hospitality, to provide adequate housing, to meet situations as they arose, and to be ready to give resourceful help in emergencies. Part of this work, particularly the

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foyer work with French girls in Paris and in other cities, has been taken over by the French Young Women's Christian Association. The last Y.W.C.A. worker was recalled from the military cemeteries in June 1925. Since that time the hostess work there has been done by the United States government.

Work was also started in Russia in the spring of 1917. At the request of Russian women work was started in Petrograd and a beginning made in Moscow. The political conditions were, however, changing rapidly and eventually the work had to be withdrawn.

From the beginning, the work as developed in European countries emphasized the training of indigenous leadership which should take over and maintain whatever part of the program was wanted and needed in that country. In certain countries Association work already existed in small compass. This work was aided and strengthened.

The Polish Grey Samaritans, already mentioned, went to Poland as the guests of the Polish government and as part of the American relief administration to help in child feeding and social service. After the war period was over the social service work that they had started was merged with that of other organizations.

In Czechoslovakia, workers sent by the Young Women's Christian Association at the request of Miss Alice Masaryk, the daughter of the president, to make a social work survey, later established a social service training school and developed a program of social service. As a result of this work a request came for the organization of a Young Women's Christian Association movement in Czechoslovakia. This movement is now an independent national Association, a corresponding member of the World's Council.

The work started in Russia in 1917 was never resumed, but in 1921 two members of the staff of the Y.W.C.A., who had worked in Russia and spoke Russian, were attached to Colonel Haskell's staff of the American Relief Administration and went to Russia to assist in refugee feeding.

In Roumania and in certain centers of the Near East where there

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had never previously been Y.W.C.A. work, beginnings were made which developed into Young Women's Christian Associations.

In Italy, Switzerland and Belgium the work started by American units was made part of the already existing work. There were, in all, serving in Europe under the Overseas Committee of the War Work Council, 407 workers in nine countries.

Some Results of the War Work

In addition to the work carried directly under the jurisdiction of the War Work Council, grants of workers and money were made to local Associations to enable them to expand their program and meet more adequately the needs of the girls in their communities. Many women were attracted both to the secretarial and the volunteer leadership groups of the Association who had never before been interested in the Y.W.C.A. To some of them it was only a channel for war service; to others it became a permanent interest.

The increased prestige which came to the national organization through its war work affected not only its relationships with other organizations but its standing with its own local Associations. This was the first experience of the National Board in doing direct work on a large scale. The work with women at the Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco in 1915, the opening of the Hollywood Studio Club for motion picture actresses in 1916, and the cafeteria and rest rooms at the Billy Sunday Tabernacle in New York City in 1915-16 were excellent preparation for this greater service. Through it the National Board became known in its own right and not through its local units alone. In looking back it seems probable that this growing acceptance of the conception that the national organization is something more than the sum of the local Associations that are its members would have been much longer delayed had it not been for the pressure of the war years and the imperative necessity for the National Board to give direct service on its own responsibility.

The outstanding characteristics of the organization as shown at

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that period seem to have been great flexibility in adapting its program, its personnel and its equipment to new and varied needs, and the speed with which this was done. Even before 1917, when little or nothing was heard of the newer processes of education as applied to the Association, nevertheless the Association was accustomed to rely for its success upon the resourcefulness of its personnel rather than on any fixed program. In other words, the essential element in the Young Women's Christian Association was leadership, both employed and volunteer, and the particular program of activities for which that leadership was responsible varied greatly and was closely related to particular community needs. Therefore when the war came it was not too great a wrench to shift and expand these programs to meet shifting and expanding needs.

During this period there was increased emphasis on the development of the various groups within the Association, an emphasis which had already begun previous to the war period but which was consolidated and strengthened through the inevitable high specialization of work during the war.

In 1917 the first conference of International Institutes was held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. At that time there were eight fully organized Institutes with staffs of nationality workers. This number increased through the war period until in 1920 there were fifty-three International Institute branches of city Associations. These conferences have been continued ever since, meeting at the time of the biennial convention of the Young Women's Christian Associations, or as a kindred group of the National Conference of Social Work.

In the autumn of 1918 the various types of work with adolescent girls carried on by a growing number of Associations since 1881, were brought together into the now well known Girl Reserve movement. Much work had been done with adolescents, not only school girls but also younger girls in business and industry, so that from the beginning four separate groups of girls were recognized: the seventh and eighth grade school girls, the junior high school girls, the older high school girls, and the younger girls in business and industry.

The Girl Reserve movement, representing as it does the younger

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membership of the Young Women's Christian Association, is not only an adolescent movement for girls, national in scope, but also an integral part of the wider fellowship of the Association. It is in large measure to the girls who have been part of the Girl Reserve movement that the whole Association, including the student group, look for future leadership. The response to a plan of work which has as its chief emphasis the developing of program out of the needs and desires of the group rather than on a standardized pattern has been encouraging and fruitful. In the two years between the starting of the Girl Reserve movement and the convention in Cleveland in 1920 the number of secretaries working with younger girls increased from 125 to nearly 500 and the membership from 20,000 to nearly 80,000.

In 1919 the first national conference of industrial girls was held in Washington, D. C. Out of this conference grew the National Industrial Assembly which meets in connection with the biennial convention of the Association and holds together in a national organization the industrial girls throughout the Association. During the war period more than 300,000 women and girls employed in war industries were served by the Young Women's Christian Association, many of them through industrial service centers where the industrial girls and women shared equally with women of the community responsibility for the policies and program of work. This experience did much to develop the leadership of industrial girls and women to the point where they were not only able to carry positions of responsibility within their own groups but also to meet on equal terms with the rest of the leadership of the Association.

In 1919 also the national Young Women's Christian Association helped to form a separate organization, the National Federation of Business and Professional Women. This seemed a necessary preliminary step in order to determine just what is the field of responsibility of the Young Women's Christian Association with business and professional women and girls. From the beginning of the organization of the Y.W.C.A. a large part of the membership, particularly in city Associations, has been made up of business girls who desired

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to avail themselves of the privileges provided by the Association, and even before the war there was increasing effort to get the more experienced business women to take responsibility on boards and committees. This effort has gone on with marked success. Following the organization of the National Federation of Business and Professional Women the Young Women's Christian Association determined to focus its program on the younger group of business girls and to work with them as a group having definite occupational interests of their own, different from industrial girls and from other groups in the Association.

This same year, 1919, the first building put up expressly for colored women and girls was opened in New York City. This marked the beginning of the effort to provide in those cities where the numbers of the Negro population warrant it, equipment equal in attractiveness and variety to that provided for white groups, and opportunities to develop leadership within their own ranks.

This period saw an increased solidarity of the student movement. In 1920 the first National Student Assembly was held in Cleveland in connection with the biennial convention, a gathering which now assumes first importance in student affairs. For some years the National Board had had on its staff a secretary responsible for work with foreign students in this country. During the war years, this work broadened in scope to include not only foreign students in this country but also international relationships and an increased concern for the whole question of internationalism.

The foreign work of the Association, as distinguished from its European war service, was greatly strengthened also at this time.

Even before the United States entered the World War the Foreign Department, because of the influence of the World's Committee of the Young Women's Christian Association and pressure from the Y.M.C.A., was facing the necessity for increased work. In January 1917 the following resolution appears in the minutes of the department:

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In order to gather up the suggestions that are coming in, and execute well and wisely plans for this larger work that should be done in Europe, it was [January 15, 1917]

RESOLVED: That the Foreign Department ask the Executive Committee to appoint a committee representing the work of the Young Women's Christian Association throughout the country, with a view to widening the scope of the work, so as to include all women and girls in the warring nations.

Then came the entry of the United States into the war and the organization of the Overseas Committee of the War Work Council. From then until October 1920 the work in Europe was the responsibility of the War Work Council. The regular work of the Foreign Department was growing, however, carried along on the same wave of expansion that was bearing all other organizations on its swell. In 1916 there were under the Foreign Department 47 secretaries in five countries. In 1917 twenty-two additional secretaries were sent out to the foreign field; in 1918 nineteen secretaries; in 1919 thirty-one secretaries; in 1920 forty-one secretaries; in 1921 fifty-seven secretaries. This does not include war workers in Europe or the Near East. This expansion of work was mainly in China, Japan, India and South America. At this time also consideration was being given to requests for organization from Mexico and the Philippines.

In October 1920 the Overseas Committee of the War Work Council was consolidated with the Foreign Department under the name of the Foreign and Overseas Department. At that time there were 118 secretaries in 32 centers in the Orient and South America, a somewhat larger number of staff in 59 centers in Europe and the Near East. The numbers were changing so rapidly through transfer and demobilization that they could hardly be counted even for any one day. This uniting of effort brought an added reality to the new department, which had to face difficult international problems, and did much to transform the earlier "missionary" conception of its work into an enlarged vision of a world fellowship of Christian women.

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Much was still to be done, however, not only in other lands but also in the United States, to forward the growth of a common understanding of the Young Women's Christian Association and its potential influence in world affairs. Up to the war period and even somewhat later any national movement developed largely according to its own needs and desires without reference to other national movements. Nevertheless, in all the varied expressions of the Association idea there was evident emphasis upon the fellowship experience gained through associating women and girls of all groups for a common purpose—abundant life for all—and planning a program which should not only offer increased opportunities to the individual for her own development but also take into consideration and strive to affect for the better the environment in which she lives and works.

The aim of the Foreign Department was no exception to this. Its endeavor had been to build movements that would eventually be self-directing and self-supporting. To that end the American secretaries sent out were chosen primarily because of their ability to develop leadership. This was equally true of the overseas work of the War Work Council. Consequently the absorption under the Foreign Department of all the work abroad meant no change in policy.

The 1920 convention voted a budget for the national organization of \$3,000,000. Of this amount one-third or \$1,000,000 was to go to the support of the foreign work.

The National Board has always used the conference as one method for increasing the solidarity of the national movement and for inspiration and education, particularly the summer conference. In the early years the conferences held were for city Associations or for student Associations, but differentiation in conferences, as in other types of Association work, was inevitable and the National Board found itself in the years immediately following the war not only with community conferences, now including in most instances town and rural Associations as well as city Associations, and student conferences for both Negro and white girls, but also with conferences for industrial girls, for Girl Reserves, for business girls, and one town and

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country conference—altogether from thirty-five to forty conferences carried on each summer.

There was during this period a great growth in local Association work not only through the expansion of existing work but through the organization of new Associations. Expansion included the development of the so-called town work which had been authorized by the convention in Los Angeles in 1915. This work was characterized by emphasis on the community as the determining element in the development of program and increased recognition of the important place of members in the Association. Considerable skill was shown in developing a type of work particularly suited to the homogeneous community where primary contacts still held significance and a very large proportion of the work must inevitably be carried by volunteer workers.

It was, of course, a predictable result of the war work that the national organization should be strengthened and that it should attain a position of prominence such as it had not before the war thought either possible or desirable. It was evident, also, that increased strength came to the local as well as the national work through this close working together. Nevertheless, in 1920, in preparation for the Sixth National Convention in Cleveland, the National Board apparently felt that something in the nature of an apology should be made for the prominent position which it had assumed. The report to the convention states as follows the contribution that the National Board felt it was making:

The national contribution which the Young Women's Christian Association has been able to make in promoting the welfare of young women in relation to the problems mentioned, has varied according to the demands, and according to the efficiency of the other organizations in operation. In general, the work has been along the certain well defined lines made possible by long and varied experience with young women in all walks of life, such as:

Diagnosing situations in which girls are involved, for the government and other organizations.

Acting as a resource of information and methods.

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Influencing the forming of programs by sitting in the councils of other organizations.

Uniting with other national groups in joint programs to remove certain obstacles to the welfare of women.

Promoting certain ideas which will better the condition of young women in proportion as they are adopted by every group and organization and community as a natural part of everyday thinking.

Providing programs of activities to be administered under other guidance than that of the Young Women's Christian Association.

Through the use of these methods the National Board is making a valuable contribution to the attempts to solve certain national problems. A brief description will make evident the influence which such activities of the National Board exert on the welfare of young women.

The national convention at Cleveland set the seal through official action on significant tendencies which were taking place within the movement. The proposed alternate basis for student Associations, which had been voted on for the first time at Los Angeles in 1915, was brought to the Cleveland convention for its second and final vote. Much had happened in these five years. Tradition had lost much of its hold and the validity of the desire of youth for its own method of self-expression had gained recognition and influence. After a lengthy but stimulating discussion, which showed to the open-minded observer the depth of spiritual feeling within the student movement and its desire to work toward the same ends but in its own ways, the proposed amendment was adopted.

At Los Angeles it had been suggested that Associations other than student might be interested in such a change. At that time it seemed an almost unheard-of idea, but directly after the adoption of the student amendment in 1920 a resolution was brought in, asking that the situation be studied for other Associations.

Of no less significance for the Young Women's Christian Association was the action taken by the Cleveland convention in endorsing the "Social Ideals of the Churches". The national conference of industrial girls meeting at Washington in the autumn of

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1919 had sent a series of resolutions to the National Board urging that the Young Women's Christian Association "consider and present to its National Board a set of standards for women in industry such as an eight-hour law, prohibition of night work, the right of labor to organize." This request was accompanied by the suggestion that the Association take steps to work for the "passage of such laws as will make possible the carrying out of these standards." A study of the issues involved was at once begun, both through the national organization and through the local Associations. As a result of this work the Committee on the National Board's Report to the biennial convention in Cleveland in the spring of 1920 recommended to the convention the adoption of the Social Ideals of the Churches, a statement drawn up and endorsed by the Federal Council of Churches. It was the general feeling of the convention that it preferred to follow the lead of the churches in this matter rather than to develop an independent statement covering much the same field.

This action came nine years after the Indianapolis convention where resolutions directed to the same end had been adopted. Much had happened, however, in those nine years. The whole country was now conscious of the economic power of women and their importance in the field of industry. Moreover, women had received full suffrage, so that their influence on legislation could be exercised directly as well as indirectly. Finally, the new unity of the national organization was so strong that the delegates present at the convention, though they were well aware of the fact that the resolutions passed there were binding on the national body but not on the local Associations which they represented, nevertheless felt a personal commitment and a loyalty to the whole which had not been possible in the earlier days.

The Social Ideals of the Churches include specific recommendations in regard to social legislation and the principles of industrial justice. The principles involved in the statements in regard to the right of workers to organize and the desirability of collective bargaining were at the time of the adoption of the Social Ideals and have been later the center of greatest discussion and most serious problems

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that the Association has faced in endeavoring to uphold these standards. To many women present at that convention many of the ideas expressed in this social creed were at least strange if not distasteful, and only the recognition of the fact that the large group of industrial women and girls in the Association membership considered such action essential if the Association purpose was to be fulfilled in their own lives, brought their endorsement. It was a fellowship experience in that the whole Association shared with and took on responsibility for the particular problems of one group. The Young Women's Christian Association had become a truly national organization.

Chapter IV

Settling Back to Normal—1921-1929

The group of steersmen who have to sail the ship of state of a national organization must be aware of the currents below the surface along which they sail. These are often so deep that it is easy to miss their connection with the waves of change on the surface.—MABEL CRATTY.

MONEY came easily during the war years. To spend wisely and well was the problem rather than to do without or to save. But as early as 1920 this situation was changing rapidly. With the war over the enthusiasm for service and for sacrifice was gone. People were eager to turn their time and their attention to their own affairs, to forget the horrors of the war years, and to lose themselves in a round of intensive personal activities and interests. Social organizations like the Young Women's Christian Association saw not only their money coming in ever more slowly but also a rapidly decreasing corps of volunteer workers.

The national organization, as well as local Associations, found themselves at this period with a greatly expanded program, with a community expecting of the organization far more than it ever had in the past, and with diminishing resources. What was to be done? For local Associations the trend toward federated financing, or community chests, as it was more commonly called, did much to answer their financial problems. Reduction was still necessary, it is true, but, using in many instances the machinery of the old war work campaigns, the new community chests did stabilize and put a firm foundation under local social agencies, including the Young Women's Christian Association.

There was no such answer for the national organization. For the future, as in the past, the national organization must depend upon the contributions from its local Associations and from individuals to make up its budget. At this point there were many

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problems. Local Associations, because of the large national budgets of the war years, were accustomed to think of the National Board as plentifully supplied with money, possibly even able to help them in time of need, rather than as a work to be supported by them. Moreover, the necessity for reducing their own budgets made them less willing to add national support to their already too large liabilities. As for individuals, while there were some whose giving was regular and sustained, no large list of individual contributors had ever been built up for the National Board.

Beginning in 1921 drastic reductions were made in the national work, but hardly rapidly enough to keep up with decreasing support. In view of the seriousness of the situation a study was made of the national form of organization. As a result of this study the field committee plan, under which the country was divided into eleven fields, each with a headquarters and a staff, in addition to the national headquarters and staff at 600 Lexington Avenue, New York City, was displaced by another method of work. The whole administration of the national work was centralized in New York, with branch offices established in Chicago, Denver, and San Francisco. The former field committees were organized as finance committees in the areas and the greatly reduced staffs worked as functional units from New York. That is, instead of a staff of a Northeastern Field Committee, or of a Southwestern Field Committee, there was a department and staff for industrial work, for city work, for finance work, for rural work, and all other necessary sections of work, all organized on a country-wide basis.

This centralization of the national organization not only reduced the financial expenditure, at the same time gaining greater flexibility because of using the staff for the country as a whole, but also worked in the interests of the unity of the national organization. The tendency of the field committees had been to develop independently, with relatively little sharing of experience or consultation on similar projects. The new plan of organization made it possible to use such experience for the country as a whole.

In the reports of the National Board to the conventions during

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this period we find statements as to the way in which the National Board sees itself in the functioning of the total national Association. In 1922 the statement reads as follows:

The task for which the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Associations exists, and for which it is commissioned by the national Association, is twofold: to help the nation to think in terms of young women, and to help the girls of America to attain to the highest standards of life, in body, mind and spirit.

In 1924 the following statement appears:

The national organization is held together by a purpose shared by each local Association belonging to it. It is the privilege of the National Board to be the guardian of this purpose from convention to convention. It is charged to see that the purpose does not become dim to the eyes of any Association; to hold it up as the lode-star for each new Association; to enter into cooperative relations with other agencies, to the end that the purpose shall be more speedily accomplished.

In the process of its operations the National Board sees its responsibility and work as falling into two general sets of relations. The first is a relation of service to the Associations, enabling all of the Associations together to be serviceable to each Association. The second is a relation of the organization as a whole to the outside world—what we are worth to our day and generation.

In 1926 the wording is somewhat different, though the conception of the national organization as the custodian of the purpose of the whole is still emphasized:

The responsibility placed upon the National Board in any interim of conventions is that of unremitting effort to carry on to fulfillment the purposes for which the national organization exists. To cultivate the growth of the varied, widely scattered Associations into a unified whole; to aid in the development of these Associations; to organize new Associations; to carry its share as a member of the World's Young Women's Christian Association in helping to establish the Association in other parts of the world—these are definite duties whose performance can be measured.

When it comes to reporting what has been done in respect to the other half of the purposes of the organization

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—advancing the interests of young women, making life more abundant for them, helping in the development of their character, molding the organization as a whole into an effective social agency—it is more difficult to see the harvest.

In 1928 the following statement appears, almost in the exact words of the previous statement:

Unremitting effort to carry on to fulfillment the purposes for which the national organization exists, is the responsibility of the National Board in any interim of conventions. To cultivate the growth into solidarity of the varied, widely scattered Associations; to aid these Associations to carry out their several purposes; to organize new Associations; to carry the share of the national organization, as a member of the World's Young Women's Christian Association, in helping to establish the Association in other parts of the world—these are duties the performance of which can to some degree be measured.

When it comes to reporting what has been done in respect to the other half of the purpose of the organization—advancing the interests of young women in general, making life richer for them, helping in the development in our day of a finer fashion of women, especially young women, mobilizing the organization as a whole into an effective social agency—it is much more difficult to make estimates. It is the values not to be weighed or measured by our clumsy scales or standards which form the final purpose of all the efforts of this organization.

In all these statements there is evident an increasing consciousness of the work carried by the national organization in the name of the whole; work which could not be done by Associations separately.

If we study further into the reports of these years we find an increasing emphasis upon relationships with other organizations. Always closely allied with the Y.M.C.A., having sprung from the same roots and with similar purposes and ideals, nevertheless the Y.W.C.A. now began to find itself for the first time frequently at cross-purposes with this closely related organization. Until this time the differentiation of Y.M.C.A. work for men and boys from the Y.W.C.A. work for women and girls had been sufficiently clear to prevent overlapping or conflict of interest to any great degree.

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During the war, however, many Y.M.C.A.'s opened their doors to serve women and girls, partly because men and boys were gone and their buildings were not being sufficiently used, partly because women and girls were demanding the same facilities and use of equipment which were available for boys and men.

This extension of work of the Y.M.C.A. to include women and girls inevitably brought misunderstanding. In communities where there was no Y.W.C.A. it was often assumed that such a department of the Y.M.C.A. *was* a Y.W.C.A. In other places, particularly in smaller communities, the organization of a Y.M.C.A., with its demand upon community resources, while it did not include membership functioning of women, seemed to prevent Y.W.C.A. organization.

So many problems arose at this point that in 1924 a commission was appointed to study relationships between the two organizations. The work of this committee went on for some years. Finally in 1929 the two national organizations together asked a foundation to finance the making of a reconnaissance study which would determine whether or not it was necessary to have more comprehensive studies of relationship between the two organizations.

The increasing power of the community chest movement made it exceedingly necessary for the Young Women's Christian Association to work in close relation with this agency both nationally and locally. The attitude of community chests toward contributions to the national organization has been widely varied. Probably the most difficult problem within this area, however, has been the restrictions which some chests have wished to put upon asking for individual gifts within the community for national organizations. In many places after the war there was a strong set toward the idea of each community for itself and keeping its resources within itself.

The relationship of the National Board to the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America became during this period exceedingly close. The National Board is represented on the Administrative Cabinet of the Federal Council by its general secretary, and also on nearly all commissions of the council. The work of the

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Social Service Commission and of the Interracial Commission has been of particular interest, since it has been increasingly evident that in both these fields the Association cannot move far in advance of the point of view and the attitudes which the church groups are willing to maintain.

The growing interest in international relations is evidenced by the convention actions from 1922 to 1930. Probably the most significant statement on internationalism ever recorded officially by the World's Committee was that made at its 1922 meeting at St. Wolfgang, Austria. The statement, which is an addition to the "Aim" of the World's Association, is as follows:

It [the World's Y.W.C.A.] also calls all national Associations to promote Christian principles of social and international conduct by encouraging the development of a right public conscience such as shall strengthen all those forces which are working for the promotion of peace and better understanding between classes, nations and races; believing that the world social order can only be made Christian through individuals devoted to the single purpose of doing God's will, and that through obedience to the law of Christ there shall follow the extension of his Kingdom in which the principles of justice, love and the equal value of every human life shall apply to national and international as well as to personal relations.

Previous to this World's Committee meeting the commission which was preparing this statement had sent it to the various national organizations for their comment and approval. This statement came to the seventh biennial convention at Hot Springs in 1922, and was endorsed by the convention in the following resolution:

That the principles enumerated in the statement regarding the relationships between classes, nations and races, issued by the World's Executive Committee, be endorsed by this convention; and that the National Board be authorized to instruct the delegates to the World's Committee meeting to vote in favor of the incorporation of such principles in the constitution of the World's Young Women's Christian Association.

Since that time the World's Committee, as well as the National Board, has referred back repeatedly to this statement as authority

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for various concrete actions taken in regard to international affairs.

The 1922 convention also voted in favor of the outlawry of war, and in this same year the National Board joined the Women's Joint Congressional Committee in order to work in Washington in behalf of measures which many of the women's organizations had agreed on promoting. In 1924 the New York convention voted approval of the entrance of the United States into the League of Nations. It was in that year that the World's Committee of the Young Women's Christian Association held its meeting in Washington just following the national convention in New York. In 1925 the National Board joined the Committee on the Cause and Cure of War, and from that time has cooperated actively in that committee's annual conferences on the cause and cure of war. Probably no one factor in our relationships has so strengthened the international relations program of the Young Women's Christian Association as has this connection. In 1928 the convention endorsed the efforts of the government "to further the negotiations of a multilateral treaty of the Great Powers for the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy."

These policies of the national Association rose and fell, of course, by the manner in which they were carried out in the local Associations, but work in behalf of international relations is recorded in steadily rising crescendo in the reports of the National Board to the conventions, which trace programs on the field.

During this same time the World's Committee of the Y.W.C.A. has assumed an increasingly important place in the general field of international relations. Cooperation has been active not only with closely allied agencies such as the World's Council of the Y.M.C.A. and the World's Student Christian Federation but also with the Continuation Committee of the Stockholm Conference, the International Labor Office, and the whole group of international women's organizations. Such international relationships inevitably strengthen the relationships between the same national agencies in the different countries, and at the same time bring the different national movements of the Young Women's Christian Association more closely together through common efforts for common ends.

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Equally keen has been the interest of the national organization in matters affecting the conditions under which women live and work in this country. Shortly after the adoption of the Social Ideals of the Churches by the convention of 1920, a legislative service was instituted by the National Board to furnish information to local Associations on proposals in state legislatures and in Congress. This has since become the National Committee on Public Affairs. State members of the committee follow state legislation and work with local Associations in their respective states, to the end that the Associations may have essential information and that their efforts may be effective.

The 1922 convention in addition to passing a resolution calling for the outlawry of war, also passed a resolution on law observance and the enforcement of the eighteenth amendment. Since that time the chief measures which have been endorsed and on which work has been done by the national or local Associations or both, are the child labor amendment, the World Court, adequate appropriations for the Women's Bureau and the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor, the Maternity and Infancy Act, including work for state provisions to meet federal aid, and certain modifications of the immigration laws to lessen the hardships of separated families. The National Board has cooperated also in an efficient citizenship campaign to get out the vote and with the Women's National Committee for Law Enforcement.

At the convention in 1922 the "commission to study the question of the personal basis of membership in Associations other than student" made a report. It was not prepared at that time to present recommendations. In 1924, at the New York convention, the commission reported, recommending an alternate personal basis for Associations other than student. After some discussion this recommendation was voted on favorably, but the constitution required that it must come to two successive conventions. Therefore it could not be put into effect until following the convention at Milwaukee in 1926, where for the second time it was approved. (At this convention also the national constitution was changed, making it no longer

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necessary for changes in basis to be presented to two successive conventions.) Meanwhile the student Associations, which had had the privilege of an alternate personal basis since 1920, were at the place where they wished to change the wording of that basis. Such a recommendation was brought to the 1928 convention, approved there, and immediately put into effect.

Over these years, in each convention, there was discussion of the financing of the national movement and of particular problems concerned with determining quotas, relationship with community chests, and similar subjects. Through all the conventions runs a thread of an increasing sense of responsibility for financing the National Board. In 1926, at Milwaukee, a resolution was adopted providing for a committee, to be elected by the convention, to review the budget of the National Board, this committee to be representative of the different parts of the field and different phases of work¹. Since that time such a committee has been a regular part of the plan of organization for national work and has greatly increased the local Associations' knowledge of as well as their sense of responsibility for the national budget.

In this year also it was voted that the amount asked for in contributions for the national budget should be within the amount actually received in the previous fiscal year. (Later this was changed to the average for the three previous years, in order to avoid extreme fluctuations.) Such a plan, it was felt, would prevent any unwarranted expansion of the national work and would serve to stabilize the national budget.

Probably more closely related to the problems of financing than appears on the surface is the fact that during this period there is perceptible a growing restlessness in regard to the reality of the membership ideals of the organization. For several years previous to the adoption of an alternate personal basis the development of a sense of responsibility on the part of the membership was greatly hampered by the artificiality of the church basis. Effort went into blurring any distinction between voters and non-voters rather than

¹In 1924 a special committee was authorized which was the forerunner of this one.

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into clarifying the conception of what membership should mean. This groping toward a better membership practice has been increased by the growing self-consciousness of groups within the Association.

In 1922 the first national assembly of industrial girls (see page 34) met at Hot Springs in connection with the biennial convention. This was the beginning of a national movement among industrial girls which not only has furnished opportunity for the industrial membership of the Association to discuss its problems and plans on a national basis but has done much to interpret this particular part of the membership to the whole.

Two years later the first national assembly of business and professional women in the Y.W.C.A. met in connection with the biennial convention in New York City. By that time the Young Women's Christian Association had gained a sense of direction with regard to its responsibility and opportunity in this particular field. The business woman, as has been said, had always played a large part in the development of the Y.W.C.A. It was not until after the war, however, that the Association became definitely conscious of the need to develop group consciousness among the younger girls in business and the professions and thus give them the opportunity to face together their common problems. This group of business girls has come rapidly into its own as a powerful part of the fellowship of the Young Women's Christian Association. To the World's conference at Budapest in 1928 there were sent from the United States an industrial girl representing the National Industrial Council and a business girl representing the National Business Women's Council. It was the first time that official delegates from these groups had been sent to a World's conference.

Meanwhile the Girl Reserve movement was growing rapidly. A common name and common objectives did much to unify younger girl work in the local Associations and at the same time to increase it, but probably the most important aid in the development of this work both locally and nationally was the application of the newer educational processes to methods of working. In the early days

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programs were evolved out of the minds of leaders, who sought through various means to impress upon their young followers the desirability of the objectives which these programs were designed to accomplish. In most cases the objectives were good, but seldom were they realized. Consequently the leaders were ready to join heartily in the experimentation of educationalists in producing a new set of principles for the guidance of program makers.

These principles rested upon the assumption that programs, to be effective, must evolve from the needs of the group, and that the group itself must give expression to this need as its members see it and in terms that they themselves will recognize. This turn from programs handed down from above to programs drawn out of the constituent groups was more quickly understood and accepted by the Young Women's Christian Association than by other similar organizations because the principles underlying this change were precisely those which underlie the rock bottom objective of the Association to associate women and girls of varied experience in carrying out a common purpose.

Nor has the Association been content to apply these principles only to program making. It has ventured out on even more unsurveyed fields in attempting to apply the same basic educational principles to its administrative processes. At this point educators and school leaders had little to give, consequently the Association has been forced to pioneer efforts. Its leadership has worked on the problems of committee and board organization, of staff leadership, of the relationship of staffs and volunteer workers. It has studied the making of agendas and the processes through which decisions are made and put into effect, it has experimented in building policies and program out of the contribution of many different persons and groups.

By these methods women and girls are being trained through participation in the work of the Young Women's Christian Association for the difficult position of responsible citizenship in the institutions of democracy. Much, however, lies before the Y.W.C.A. in this realm. The policy of the whole national organization, the knit-

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ting together of the varied strands of national life, and the continual pouring into the hopper of work to be done the accumulated wisdom and experience of varied types of women and girls all over this wide country are imperfectly understood and only in the beginnings of accomplishment.

Like all national organizations, the National Board is frequently accused of an academic and theoretical viewpoint, little related to the realism of difficult situations as they appear in local communities. In a sense, generalizations, no matter how close they are in their origin to reality, must seem academic in that they never exactly meet any one local situation. This tendency toward the theoretical in the national work has been corrected to a considerable degree by the direct responsibility which from time to time the National Board has carried for pieces of work in local areas. The wide experience gained through the war period did a good deal to accustom the national leadership to the difficulties of making things happen, and since then the responsibility of administering the Hollywood Studio Club has brought one useful kind of experience, and the ownership of and responsibility for the Dodge Hotel in Washington another. This latter project, which resulted from the war work, has become an important experiment in hotel management. The National Board at present operates also two national camps, Maqua, in Maine, and Okoboji, in Iowa, as well as the national conference grounds at Asilomar, California. All these pieces of work afford training and increasing experience in the actual handling of situations.

The Y.W.C.A. Retirement Fund was organized in 1925 with an accrued liability to take care of the greater part of the prior service of secretaries already in the movement. Since its beginning a large proportion of secretaries coming into the Association have participated in this fund. Perhaps more than any other one factor the establishment of this fund has served to stabilize the secretaryship in the Young Women's Christian Association.

Steady reduction in the size of the National Board budget since 1921 has presented deep problems. During the war years the work

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of the Y.W.C.A. expanded in many different directions, determined always and only by the needs of women and girls and the ability of the organization to meet those needs in some degree. At the end of the war period difficult decisions had to be made as to what work should be continued, what should be turned over to other organizations, and what should be discontinued. Such decisions were not easy to make. The economic dependence and the political inequality under which women had lived for so long had both been swept away, and women had not yet learned their way about in the new world of personal and political responsibility. What they wanted and what they needed were both undetermined, in large measure, and ahead of such an organization as the Young Women's Christian Association lay a varied field of service, impossible to occupy on all its fronts.

Faced with all these possibilities the Y.W.C.A., through its convention actions and the month by month decisions of the National Board, its executive body, laid emphasis on the development of a body of members which should be representative of women and girls of all groups in this country. In working toward this, stress was put on the development of leadership within each group, to the end that this varied leadership might assume together the responsibility for the policies and program of the organization.

It was not easy to choose at this time to follow the policy of deepening and intensifying Association life in this country rather than the policy of an expanding organization spread thin over a large geographical area. A certain number of new Associations were of course organized every year under the guidance of the National Board, but in nearly every case this was done only after pressure from and proved interest of local groups. It was the normal increase of a healthy organization and in no way due to a program of promotion.

At the convention in 1924 the National Board was authorized to spend not less than one-third of its budget difference for the work of the Foreign Division. This general principle has been adhered to ever since, and as the total budget has been steadily reduced, it is obvious that the expenditures of the Foreign Division have had to

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be reduced also. This gradual lessening of the amount to be spent has meant a constantly recurring scrutiny of the work in each of the foreign countries and valiant efforts to lessen expenditures at every point. It has also meant that the foreign work, like the work at home, could not meet the demands upon it for new organization, but had to spend its efforts in the main on the conservation of already existing work. To what extent the fact that the Association has very generally swung away from the method of soliciting designated gifts, as well as from the older appeal of the missionary enterprise, to the newer but more diffuse emphasis on internationalism has increased the difficulty of raising money is uncertain.

This necessity for constant re-evaluation of the work in other countries carried on under the Foreign Division, both to ensure that the decisions made in the face of reduced income should be wise ones and to provide up-to-date reliable material to be used in raising money, led the National Board to join with the National Council of the Young Men's Christian Association in seeking the help of a foundation to make a study of the work in the foreign field. This study was begun in 1929.

Chapter V

Meeting Another Emergency—1929-1931

For the Young Women's Christian Association is useful today not because our ideals or our ideas are extraordinary but because we have a structure over which ideas and ideals can pass.—MABEL CRATTY.

BEGINNING with the autumn of 1929 the United States, in fact the whole world, has lived in the shadow of a great economic depression. Unemployment had been steadily increasing for some time previous to the recognized depression, but in the bustle and rush of apparent prosperity, rising investment values, high wages and general optimism the fact that month by month a steadily growing army of men and women were finding increasing difficulty in obtaining work went almost unnoticed.

At the time of the biennial convention in Detroit in April 1930, unemployment was seen as a possible menace to our sense of security and as affecting women and girls more directly than any similar crisis in the past. Unemployment and its effect on women and girls, as well as possible remedies for the underlying causes of recurrent crises of unemployment, were discussed in the industrial and the business and professional assemblies as well as in sixteen of the discussion groups into which the whole body of delegates divided for three periods. As a result of this discussion the three so-called Wagner Bills concerned with unemployment were endorsed by the convention. The bills provided for:

1. Long-range planning of public works.
2. Cooperation of the federal government in the maintenance of state and municipal public employment offices.
3. Collection of statistics concerning unemployment by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor.

As the senate committee was dealing with the bills while the convention was in session, a further resolution authorized the sending

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of a message from the convention to the senate committee urging the passage of these bills. At the same time individual delegates and visitors were asked to send similar messages to their senators. The sending of these messages and the receipt of an answering wire from Senator Wagner gave to the convention a sense of direct participation in a matter of public welfare that added reality to its function of determining national polity.

In many ways the Detroit convention seems to be a high point in the fellowship experience of the national organization. There was in most instances full and free discussion of resolutions and of business matters from the floor of the convention, participated in by members of all groups present, young and old, experienced and inexperienced. In the difficult field of race relations there was also progress, not in the matter of resolutions passed but in life lived at the convention itself. Little race consciousness was observed. The Negro delegates took part with naturalness in the various meetings, speaking from the floor at the sessions of the whole as well as sharing in the smaller group discussions. Negro women were members of the various convention committees and were responsible leaders in the student and industrial assemblies.

This convention was not one isolated situation but rather one incident of a long series of related happenings and the result of a definite philosophy of interracial work. Negro and white women alike seem to be learning the difficult lesson of building from experience to higher levels instead of constantly judging immediate situations in the light of desirable ideal conditions. This is a person by person undertaking, laboriously carried on over years and through a devotion to a common cause, a cause rooted in the Christian faith in the value of personality—all personalities—and committed to the method of love; a cause committed also to a "divine discontent" that refuses to put its efforts primarily into fitting women and girls to their environment but rather has the long look, putting its greatest endeavor into the effort to make that environment one in which personality can grow, in which life can and does have satisfactions.

Through the long list of resolutions adopted by that convention

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runs the essential thread of the "Association idea." On the one hand there was concern for the kind of world in which we live, shown by resolutions on the improvement of working conditions of women and girls in business and industry, the promotion of good will and understanding in international relations, and the support of measures furthering the social welfare of foreign-born residents. At the same time there was realization of the importance for each individual of a full creative life, shown in the resolutions on the creative use of leisure,² adult education, and a renewed commitment to the need for spiritual resources for living. There was also a predominant interest in religion and the following program of faith and works was recommended for the next biennium:

1. An endeavor to achieve clarity of thought and expression for our growing experience of God;
2. A continuing search for a deeper understanding of Jesus;
3. A thoughtful scrutiny of our Association practices and relationships in order to bring them into closer conformity to the law of love, and a more adequate recognition of the supreme value of human personality;
4. An effort to realize an ever enlarging and ever more inclusive fellowship among women;
5. A giving of ourselves anew to help in the task of establishing righteousness upon earth.

Even with the growing financial anxieties in the country, the convention was loath to enter another biennium without any provision for expansion of the program of the Foreign Division. Consequently a resolution was passed as follows:

That the general policy of stabilizing existing work before entering new fields be reaffirmed, since it is a sound policy, and since there is continued need of expansion within the present fields.

That Cuba be made an exception, since it presents unusual needs and opportunities at this time.

That a unit of secretaries, not to exceed three in number, be sent to Havana in the near future, to undertake the provisional organization of Association work.

That before appointing secretaries for this work in Cuba, pledges to cover the budgets needed for 1931-1932 be secured.

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It is a matter of grave concern that the rapidly deepening economic depression has made it impossible even to attempt to carry out the part of the resolution referring to Cuba.

To this convention came also a request for the appointment of a commission to study the form of the personal basis for Associations other than student and to present a rewording of the preamble and purpose to the next convention. Beginning with 1915 some question in regard to the basis of membership—in other words, the method for ensuring a certain degree of unity in the leadership as regards the fundamental purposes of the Association—has been discussed at every convention. To some of the leadership this has been a trying process, to others it has appeared one of the surest signs of vitality in the movement. So long as the interest of the whole movement, as expressed in convention, is active and alert at the point of the fundamental assumptions at the root of the organization, so long is the Y.W.C.A. a growing, living organism rather than a static institution.

Hardly was the 1930 convention over before the National Board was made more acutely aware, through reports from local centers, of the rapidly increasing unemployment among women and girls as well as men. In spite of efforts of responsible groups to lighten the gloom by optimistic statements, the concrete cases of suffering and need were too many to be ignored. In October 1930 the National Board voted to offer to the President of the United States all its resources in helping to meet this emergency as it affected women and girls. The response to this offer was an immediate request that the Young Women's Christian Association cooperate with the Emergency Committee for Unemployment appointed by President Hoover.

Meanwhile reports from local Associations were increasingly urgent. It was evident that they were looking to the National Board to supply leadership in this emergency. So immediate were the questions, so pressing the urgency, that the National Board decided to call a conference of local Associations at headquarters, to discuss and adopt policies and programs. This conference was held on

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November 17 and 18, 1930, and was attended by 186 representatives of 76 Associations, coming from all sections of the country from Florida to Maine, from Texas to Michigan, from Oregon to California.

The conference devoted two sessions to interchange of experience and then divided into eight subcommittees covering the following subjects: the Association program with unemployed girls, housing, employment bureau problems, the Association as an employer, finance, problems of foreign communities, relationships to other organizations, and a ninth subcommittee called "The Long View" which dealt with standards of work and constructive measures for the future. The reports of these subcommittees were discussed by the entire conference and received its endorsement. The following day they were accepted by the National Board. These findings were then sent out to local Associations and formed the basis for the developing policy and program of local Associations as well as of the National Board.

In December the Relief Section of the President's Committee asked the National Board to take special responsibility for women and girls of the "white collar" class, both in trying to obtain employment for them and in direct relief. This request was in recognition of the fact that women and girls in this group had never before been in need of help, were hard to find, and would and did turn to the Young Women's Christian Association. As they came to the Association for a job or as a place to rest after a hopeless search, sympathetic workers often discovered their need for actual relief. The national Association urged local Associations to undertake special responsibility at this point and after working out careful plans of cooperation with other agencies engaged in relief work, nearly all the Associations in large cities made special plans for reaching and helping this group.

Again as in 1917, the Association found itself turned to by the government in a time of great emergency directly affecting women and girls. But this time the scene was greatly changed. With increasing need and growing opportunities for service on every hand, the

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financial resources of the organization, both local and national, instead of being greatly augmented as they were in the war years, were actually depleted, even below the normal resources of the previous years. And this predicament was shared in by other agencies attempting to do their part in the same situation. The National Board decided, in addition to turning its united staff to this work, to raise a small supplementary budget to cover pieces of work necessary at this time but for which the Young Women's Christian Association is normally unequipped—for instance, case work in relief situations. This small budget was raised, which made possible during 1931 the employment of a few additional workers, with adequate travel allowances and facilities for getting out special material.

Every Young Women's Christian Association in the United States has been affected in some way by the unemployment situation. Not only have heavy demands been made on them by their regular clientele but they are also in many places the natural centers to which other girls and women in need have turned or have been directed. Relief has of necessity been part of the program, in some cases through loans; in others through direct supplying of shelter, food or clothes. Effort has been of course intensified toward securing jobs whenever possible. Special emphasis has been put also on personal adjustment problems.

In place after place there was little recognition of the effect that unemployment has on women and girls. When workers are discharged discrimination is shown in most instances first toward non-citizens of foreign birth and members of other races, particularly Negroes, then toward married women, and finally toward women in general. A large section of the public still thinks in terms of every woman's having a family group on which she can fall back in case of real need. The change from a rural civilization with spacious, even if inconvenient, homes, and food of some kind, to an urban civilization characterized by small family units, apartment house living, and dependence for food and all other necessities on an earned wage, has been imperfectly realized by people in general. For many women and girls the Young Women's Christian Asso-

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ciation is the only substitute for family protection. Keeping up the morale of the unemployed was naturally accepted as one of the tasks of the Y.W.C.A., and free recreation, educational classes, vocational schools, and other activities giving opportunities for friendship and normal living have been provided by Associations all over this country.

In the autumn of 1931 the President organized a new committee called the President's Organization for Unemployment Relief. Mrs. Robert E. Speer, president of the National Board, was appointed to this committee and also to two of its subcommittees, one on the Cooperation of National Agencies and one on the Administration of Relief. Early in the autumn the President's Committee requested the National Board to furnish them with a guidance report on the care of homeless women, for use in local communities. The National Board accepted this responsibility and prepared from direct study of the experience of local cities during the previous year a report on the "unemployed woman without resources," a designation that early appeared more desirable and more accurate than the phrase "homeless women."

In all this experience of unemployment perhaps no one feature has been more striking than the wide variety of women and girls affected. By no means confined to the class of unskilled labor, the great sense of insecurity which has permeated all economic levels of society has increased the realization of common problems in all groups, and there are indications that it may have increased also the sense of class distinctions, through the use of social position or personal influence to keep or get jobs.

Because of its work nationally at the ports and locally with foreign-speaking women and girls, the Y.W.C.A. was called upon, as it had been during the war, to interpret the situation to the foreign groups and to help them to secure their due rights and privileges at this time. The harsh working of the deportation laws set up to meet other conditions gave rise to an increasing number of crises that could not be ignored. At this point, as well as at many

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others, a vivid, colorful and at times tragic story could be written if space permitted.

In the present situation the Young Women's Christian Association seems to be in a unique position, in that it is doing everything possible to meet the emergency in terms of direct relief and has at the same time continued to work on the more removed but far-reaching causes of the depression. At the national conference on unemployment in November 1930 (see page 59), the Wagner Bills for the establishment of public employment agencies and prosperity reserve plans were again discussed and endorsed, and unemployment insurance both public and private, as well as other forms of social insurance, were put on the calendar for study. Following that conference, many local Associations set up study groups and held special meetings, often with well known speakers to talk on these subjects. In February 1932 the National Board in the following resolution endorsed the principle of compulsory unemployment insurance:

Believing that the burden of unemployment should be considered as partly a responsibility of industry and that the worker's economic security should be safeguarded as far as possible, the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Associations endorses the principle of unemployment insurance, and recommends to the local Associations that they interest themselves in state action.

This concern both for the upstream causes of the ever-recurring problem of unemployment and for direct relief measures, is another example of the inclusiveness of the Association idea.

When this emergency came upon the Y.W.C.A. it was early evident that the local Associations were far better equipped to meet the situation by adapting and developing their program than they had been when the war began. Although they turned immediately to the National Board for advice, they did not wait for it before taking their places with other agencies in trying to meet the situation, in some instances assuming the initiative. The fact that the program of the Young Women's Christian Association has never been a pattern program but has been directly related to and de-

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veloped out of the needs and desires of women in each community made it easier for it than for another type of organization to change its program rapidly, as needs changed. This flexibility in program planning combined with the greatly increased stability of the organization since the World War probably furnish the explanation of the greater responsibility assumed by the local Associations in this emergency, and the consequent confining of the work of the national organization to its normal bounds of advisory service rather than extending it to direct work for women and girls as it had been forced to do during the war period.

Three surveys already referred to briefly in the preceding chapter of the work of the Young Women's Christian Association have been in progress the past three years, two of them in cooperation with the Y.M.C.A. The first of these studies was a "Reconnaissance Study of the Relations in the Field in the United States of America of the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A.," made under the direction of Dr. Herbert N. Shenton of Syracuse University during 1930. This survey, financed by a foundation, was an exploratory study to determine whether or not there was need of a more extensive and intensive survey of the relationship between the two organizations. It was directed in the main to the local field and its conclusions point toward local experimentation and cooperation. This study has resulted in the appointment of a joint committee of the two Associations to further cooperative projects and to promote understanding between the two organizations. Although the study, not only because of a small appropriation but also because of its objective, was of necessity brief and incomplete, nevertheless the methods used ensured a high degree of objectivity and a factual basis for conclusions.

The second study, begun in 1929 but not finished until 1931, was the far more extensive "International Survey of the Foreign Work of the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A." of both the United States and Canada. This study was directed by Dr. F. Ernest Johnson, executive secretary of the Department of Research and Education of the

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Federal Council of Churches, and was of course pointed toward the Association work in other countries to which grants of money or of secretaries are being made by the Associations of North America.

Its objective was an evaluation of the work being done, in order that wise decisions may be made for the future and accurate and reliable material may be submitted to donors. The favorable report of this survey, coming at a time of financial insecurity and general questioning of the work of organizations, should be a source of increased confidence in the world program and of enthusiasm as to its possibilities. Moreover, so comprehensive is the survey in its study of the roots of the Association and the basic assumptions which underlie its work, that the conclusions and philosophy expressed are of major significance to the whole organization.

In the autumn of 1930 a study of the methods of work of the National Board was undertaken by Mr. Mark E. Jones, a consulting economist. The original objective of this study was preparation for an expanded national program; accordingly it dealt with the processes of national work and has resulted in a thorough-going reorganization of the administrative set-up and work of the National Board. As the study went on, however, it became more and more evident that because of the financial situation an expanded program was far in the future; that, on the contrary, further reduction was imperative. Consequently the putting into effect of the results of the study have had to be coincident with a radical reduction in the budget of the National Board and a material lessening of its service to local Associations.

These three studies, affecting, as they do, local programs at their points of cooperation with the Y.M.C.A., the foreign work, and the methods of work of the National Board, bring into relief what are probably the three most important elements in the life of this or any organization—its basic philosophy, as shown in the international survey; its flexibility in cooperative effort for common tasks, as shown in the study of Y.M.C.A.-Y.W.C.A. relationships; and its efficiency and sound business methods, as emphasized in the study of the National Board. Taken together they form a compre-

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hensive critique on the organization as a whole, as well as material for predicting its major lines of effort for the next few years.

In spite of the numerous preoccupations of the National Board with its own internal affairs during this period, there has been an increasing program emphasis on international education. The vote of the 1930 convention in favor of international disarmament stimulated interest in all current phases of disarmament work. This took practical shape in the preparatory work for the World Disarmament Conference in 1932. Three hundred and fifteen local Associations secured 77,000 signatures to the Cause and Cure of War disarmament petition taken to Geneva in January of 1932. The action of the 1930 convention to the effect that the Young Women's Christian Association would cooperate in the bicentennial anniversary of George Washington's birth in 1932 was related to the training in citizenship which is part of the Y.W.C.A. program on national and international affairs. Cooperation with kindred groups of women, both here and abroad, has increased greatly, evidenced particularly in the work of the Women's International Disarmament Committee at Geneva in 1932, which was headed by a staff member of the World's Young Women's Christian Association, and a former member of the national staff in this country, Miss Mary Dingman. It is of special interest that a member of the National Board, Dr. Mary E. Woolley, was the only woman member appointed on the official delegation from the United States to the Disarmament Conference. Meanwhile the world-wide depression has deepened the sense of identification with Association members in other countries and the study of the economic interdependence of nations is assuming increasing significance.

Chapter VI

What of the Future?

The frontiers of the continent have been won, but the frontiers of human life are not yet mapped. Many of the trails are not yet blazed. But because we are made in the image of One who is the way, we must go on toward the goal of a New Heaven and a New Earth. By many roads, by ways beset with danger and trouble we come, but the goal is the same: a New Heaven, a new knowledge of God, a new idea of the universe, a new grasp of the might and power of the Spirit; and a New Earth, a world in which the power of the Spirit and the law of the Spirit may take hold of material things and use them for the good of all.

—EMMA BAILEY SPEER.

IN LOOKING back over twenty-five years of work, certain elements in national Association life show up with the vividness of colored threads in a woven ribbon of neutral hue. The first of these is the "Association idea," gathered up by the new national organization in 1906 out of the life and experience of the old American Committee and International Board and carried on through the years. This emphasis on a Christian organization with a social program which shall have a close relationship to the churches and yet be completely outside any ecclesiastical connection, is constant. For the Young Women's Christian Association this has meant ability to offer to women opportunity for leadership in a lay religious organization quite beyond any such opportunity within the churches. Moreover, as we scan the history of these years it appears to be true not only that the influence of the Y.W.C.A. has tended toward interdenominational interests rather than toward building up denominations, but that in offering more satisfactory leadership experiences to women than has the church, the Association has tended to become in itself a resource for the increasing of spiritual power and energy in a way that the early founders probably never

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anticipated. The Y.W.C.A. was organized primarily to furnish the means by which women of various church backgrounds might work together on the common interests of women and girls everywhere; it is becoming increasingly evident, however, that the Association must in a new way take cognizance of the need for furnishing to its leadership more adequate opportunities for renewed spiritual power and increased dynamic for the Christian life. In view of the fact that the Young Women's Christian Association makes no claim to be a creedal organization or in any way to take the place of the church, it has hesitated to assume this responsibility except indirectly through its work in the realm of methods of religious education and discussion of the application of Christian ideals of life to concrete situations. It is also aware of the difficulty of meeting the diverse needs of women and girls schooled in all branches of the Christian faith and widely differing at the point of creed, forms of worship, and conception of the church itself. Nevertheless, the Association is beginning to recognize its opportunities as well as its responsibility for helping its leadership through the different streams of Christian thought, to increase the content and experience of their religious life and to utilize their widely differing approaches to religious truth constructively in the common task.

Hardly less evident than the vigorous diversity of the Association is its aspiration toward unity. In the early days in England, again in this country at the coming together of the two national movements, later in days of internal crisis such as the division of opinion in regard to the adoption of a personal as well as a church basis, at all these times unity has appeared not only as desirable but as the symbol of a spiritual fellowship which could and did include diverse religious viewpoints under the ægis of a common religious purpose. So highly has unity been regarded in itself that there have been times when it seemed almost as if the possibility of progress would be sacrificed to it. Be that as it may, in a day when separation has been far easier than unity, the Young Women's Christian Association has kept its wholeness, at the same time developing sufficient flexibility to allow group development and group expression

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within. This lack of organizational rigidity is shown particularly in the development of the student movement as part of the whole Association movement, and the growth within the whole of a national movement of industrial girls and women.

Another interesting colored thread traceable through the years is the spontaneity with which the Association has grown. One woman who has known the Association in another community, perhaps in student days, has often proved sufficient leaven to start her community thinking in terms of the objectives of the Young Women's Christian Association. In other places the outreach of a summer conference, the stir caused by a national convention, or even a newspaper article, has started the idea of forming an Association and, once started, the snowball of interest and enthusiasm has rolled up quickly. Some of these impulses, it is true, have been as ephemeral as their beginnings were casual, but in plenty of other cases the results have been permanent.

Perhaps the brightest thread discernible through the years is courage. Whether in the voting of the first national budget of \$100,000, or the taking up of heavy responsibility during the war, or adopting the Social Ideals of the Churches, with the consequent probability of misunderstanding and criticism, or the facing up to concrete and puzzling situations in race relationships or industrial questions—all along the way there has been intelligent effort to find the right path, conviction in choosing it, and determination in following wherever it led, much of this in a day when women were only beginning to learn the ways of organization, administration, and group responsibility.

One characteristic of the Y.W.C.A. which its leadership has always enjoyed dwelling on is that of being a pioneer, a characteristic closely related to these other qualities just spoken of, for no organization or individual can be a pioneer without courage and without a compelling motive. Probably at no point has this pioneering shown more clearly than in the help given by the Y.W.C.A. to the founding of other organizations. The National Association of Travelers' Aid Societies, the International Migration Service, the

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Women's Foundation for Health, the National Federation of Business and Professional Women, the Summer School for Women Workers in Industry at Bryn Mawr, are some of the organizations that owe their origin and impetus in large part to the Young Women's Christian Association.

The Association has not hesitated, either, to venture into new fields and to try new ways. Much of this kind of pioneering in the past has been in the field of material things—buildings, large budgets and new enterprises of an institutional nature. Increasingly, however, slow but steady progress in the field of social relations, matters of race, of industry, of peace, of internationalism, have brought the Association by gradual stages to the place where it is well in advance and where each new step often means venturing in untried paths.

One of the serious problems met at this point is the strain that comes at times on a single local Association. The actions of the convention are binding on the national organization but not on its autonomous local Associations. Nevertheless the whole Association movement is bound so closely together that if a local Association, particularly one that is alive to the needs and interests of women, incurs the criticism of groups of individuals in the community by following out convention action, it becomes in the eyes of the public liable not only for its own acts but also for the policies and practices of similar nature of the national Association. It is considerations of this kind that impel the National Board to refer to the national convention questions of detail in regard to its public affairs program and to ask repeatedly for endorsement of policies. It is becoming more and more true that the Young Women's Christian Association is a movement which cannot be easily broken into its component parts, and that each local Association bears in time of crisis the burden of the whole, even as the good name of the national organization in the eyes of the public is determined by the character of any particular local Association on which attention is focused. There is perhaps no stronger evidence than this of the essential "movement" character of the organization.

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The growing interest of the Association, both local and national, in matters of public concern such as child welfare, education, or working conditions of women and children, has been apparent in each convention. Particularly prominent in these public interests of the organization is the increasing activity and sense of responsibility in international affairs, in particular the organization of the world for peace. This is of course entirely natural when we look at the many facets from which attention is focused on such matters: the historic responsibility that the Association has taken for the spread of the Association movement to other lands, carried on in the main through the Foreign Division; the work in the United States with the foreign-born, including efforts to understand their foreign backgrounds and to appreciate the cultural heritage they bring to America; the ever growing vitality of the relationship of this national organization to the World's organization and through it to other national Young Women's Christian Associations. To these natural channels of interest might be added the historic missionary compulsion of the Protestant church, the constant coming and going of Association representatives, including many Americans, between the various national movements, and the inherent concern always characteristic of the Association for the environment in which the individual lives, which today means the world.

It is no wonder that the cable of international interest is so strong; made up, as it is, of so many different strands it is far stronger and more flexible than would be the case if our interest were centered on only one aspect of world affairs. Through its increasing understanding of the processes by which changes are brought about, the leadership of the national organization has come to appreciate the fact that the strain, or tension, of working on these great problems of which we are inevitably a part is not a calamity but rather an essential step in the slow evolution of human society. To the extent that this can be understood, in times of crisis as well as in times of serenity, will the organization without panic

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or prejudice be able to play its good part in the "extension of the Kingdom of God."

The complexity of the Young Women's Christian Association, made up of so many different kinds of women and girls doing so many varieties of things, interested in so many aspects of life, is often baffling not only to the general public but to its own leadership. It but reflects the complexity of the modern world. In addition to this, however, the Association is accustomed at different times and under different circumstances to characterize itself as a woman movement, as a social agency, as an educational organization, and as a religious organization. The only way in which harmony and integration can be brought out of these differing interests and points of view is by persistently considering the Association as a whole. Even as the Association has had the courage and the wisdom down through the years to try to look at women and girls whole, to face their many needs and desires and help them to develop a philosophy for the whole of life, so through the organization there is true unity in spite of its diversity. At one time it does look like a representative of the woman movement, at another like a social agency, at still another like an educational organization, and it is at varying times all of these things. But far more important is the fact that it is all of these things at once, subordinated to a dominating religious purpose which is the touchstone for its decisions and a guide post in determining the way in which it shall go.

Through these twenty-five years of national work there has been evident an increasing differentiation of the national organization and its functions from the local organizations and their functions, with, at the same time, an increasing unity in the Association movement as a whole. Absorbed as most of the effort of the national organization was in the first years in helping already existing Associations and establishing new ones, this function has now become only one among several important duties. The foreign work, it is true, was always a part of this national organization, but in the early days it assumed relatively little importance either in size or interest. As the Association has grown, interest in the foreign work

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has proportionally increased. Moreover, the local Associations are constantly realizing the wide area in which they must function together as a national body rather than separately. In all these matters which affect national and world relationships the heaviest responsibility rests with the national organization. The direction in which it goes is determined at each convention by the local Associations there represented and at each convention an increasing burden of work for the whole is laid upon the National Board.

On May 5, 1932, the twelfth national convention of the Young Women's Christian Associations of the United States of America convenes at Minneapolis, Minnesota, just twenty-five years and five months from the historic day when the first national convention met in New York City, on December 5, 1906. This national meeting at Minneapolis will be the first guide post of the second twenty-five years of national existence. It comes at a critical time in the world's history, at a time when women have unusual opportunity and responsibility. The Young Women's Christian Association is, as organizations go, old and seasoned. What has the nation and the world the right to expect from it for the next twenty-five years?

APPENDIX

FROM THE CONSTITUTION OF THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AS ADOPTED BY THE NINTH NATIONAL CON- VENTION, 1926.

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Any Young Women's Christian Association may be a member of this organization upon application to the National Board and upon filing with it a copy of its constitution, showing that its voting and office-holding membership is limited to women who are members of Protestant evangelical churches.¹

Section 2. Any Young Women's Christian Association other than student may be a member of the national organization upon application to the National Board and upon filing with it a copy of its constitution, showing

- A. That its voting and office-holding membership is limited to women who are members of Protestant evangelical churches;
- or*
- B. That its constitution embodies the following

I. Preamble

The Young Women's Christian Association of, affirming the Christian faith in God, the Father; and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord and Saviour; and in the Holy Spirit, the Revealer of truth and Source of power for life and service; according to the teaching of holy scripture and the witness of the church, declares its purpose to be

II. Purpose

- 1. To associate young women in personal loyalty to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord;
- 2. To lead them into membership and service in the Christian church;
- 3. To promote growth in Christian character and service through physical, social, mental and spiritual training;

¹ By Protestant evangelical churches are meant those churches which, because of their essential oneness in Jesus Christ as their divine Lord and Saviour, are entitled to representation in the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America under the action of the Inter-Church Conference held in New York City, November 1905. The list of churches which have availed themselves of this privilege up to date will be found on record at the office of the National Board.

Appendix

4. To become a social force for the extension of the Kingdom of God.

III. Qualifications

1. *For Electors.* Any woman or girl of the community, over eighteen years of age, may become an elector in the Association provided she makes the following declaration: I desire to enter the Christian fellowship of the Association. I will loyally endeavor to uphold the purpose in my own life and through my membership in the Association.
2. *For Board Members.* Members of the board shall be chosen from the electors of the Association. Three-fourths of the members of the board, including three-fourths of the officers of the Association, shall be members of churches eligible to membership in the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.
3. *For Delegates.* Three-fourths of the voting members of each local delegation at the national convention must be members of churches eligible to membership in the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

Section 3. Any student² Young Women's Christian Association may be admitted to membership whose constitution embodies the following provisions.

The Young Women's Christian Association of, affirming the Christian faith in God, the Father; and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord and Saviour; and in the Holy Spirit, the Revealer of truth and Source of power for life and service; according to the teaching of holy scripture and the witness of the church, declares its purpose to be

Purpose

1. To lead students to faith in God through Jesus Christ;
2. To lead them into membership and service in the Christian church;
3. To promote their growth in Christian faith and character, especially through the study of the Bible;
4. To influence them to devote themselves, in united effort with all Christians, to making the will of Christ effective in human society, and to extending the kingdom of God throughout the world.

Membership

Any woman of the institution may be a member of the Association, provided,

1. That she is in sympathy with the purpose of the Association;
2. That she makes the following declaration: It is my purpose to live as a true follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

²This alternate basis for student Associations was adopted by the Sixth National Convention at Cleveland, 1920.

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Qualifications for Leadership

1. All members of the Cabinet (officers and chairmen of standing committees) shall commit themselves to furthering the purpose of the Association.
2. Two-thirds of the Cabinet members shall be members of churches which are entitled to representation in the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and only those delegates who are members of such churches shall be entitled to vote in conventions.
3. Members of the Advisory Board shall meet the qualifications of Cabinet members.

Article II, Section 3, of the national constitution was changed to read as follows at the tenth national convention at Sacramento, 1928.

Any student Young Women's Christian Association may be admitted to membership where the constitution embodies the following provisions:

PURPOSE: The Young Women's Christian Association of, a member of the Young Women's Christian Associations of the United States of America, and a participant in the World's Student Christian Federation, declares its purpose to be:

We, the members of the Young Women's Christian Association of, unite in the desire to realize full and creative life through a growing knowledge of God.

We determine to have a part in making this life possible for all people. In this task we seek to understand Jesus and follow Him.

Appendix

SOCIAL IDEALS OF THE CHURCHES

From the Report of the Sixth National Convention of the Young Women's Christian Associations, Cleveland, Ohio, April 13-20, 1920.

Action taken by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America at a special meeting held at Cleveland, Ohio, May 6-8, 1919.

Resolved: That we reaffirm the social platform adopted by the First Quadrennial in Chicago, 1912, and ratified by the Second Quadrennial in St. Louis, 1916.

That the churches stand for—

1. Equal rights and justice for all men in all stations of life. ✓
2. Protection of the family by the single standard of purity, uniform divorce laws, proper regulation of marriage, proper housing.
3. The fullest possible development of every child, especially by the provision of education and recreation.
4. Abolition of child labor.
5. Such regulation of the conditions of toil for women as shall safeguard the physical and moral health of the community.
6. Abatement and prevention of poverty.
7. Protection of the individual and society from the social, economic and moral waste of the liquor traffic.
8. Conservation of health.
9. Protection of the worker from dangerous machinery, occupational diseases and mortality.
10. The right of all men to the opportunity for self-maintenance, for safeguarding this right against encroachments of every kind, for the protection of workers from the hardships of enforced unemployment.
11. Suitable provision for the old age of the workers, and for those incapacitated by injury.
12. The right of employees and employers alike to organize; and for adequate means of conciliation and arbitration in industrial disputes.
13. Release from employment one day in seven.
14. Gradual and reasonable reduction of hours of labor to the lowest practicable point, and for that degree of leisure for all which is a condition of the highest human life.
15. A living wage as a minimum in every industry, and for the highest wage that each industry can afford.
16. A new emphasis upon the application of Christian principles to the acquisition and use of property, and for the most equitable division of the product of industry that can ultimately be devised.

Facing the social issues involved in reconstruction,
Resolved: That we affirm as Christian churches,

1. That the teachings of Jesus are those of essential democracy and express themselves through brotherhood and the cooperation of all

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groups. We deplore class struggle and declare against all class domination, whether of capital or labor. Sympathizing with labor's desire for a better day and an equitable share in the profits and management of industry, we stand for orderly and progressive social reconstruction instead of revolution by violence.

2. That an ordered and constructive democracy in industry is as necessary as political democracy, and that collective bargaining and the sharing of shop control and management are inevitable steps in its attainment.

3. That the first charge upon industry should be that of a wage sufficient to support an American standard of living. To that end we advocate the guarantee of a minimum wage, the control of unemployment through government labor exchanges, public works, land settlement, social insurance and experimentation in profit sharing and co-operative ownership.

4. We recognize that women played no small part in the winning of the war. We believe that they should have full political and economic equality with equal pay for equal work, and a maximum eight-hour day. We declare for the abolition of night work by women, and the abolition of child labor; and for the provision of adequate safeguards to insure the moral as well as the physical health of the mothers and children of the race.

OUTLINE OF HISTORY

1855—Beginning in England. Lady Kinnaird, opened the North London Home, or General Female Training Institute, as the first Young Women's Christian Association.

Miss Emma Roberts of Barnet began the Prayer Union.

1866—Beginning in the United States. Young Women's Christian Association organized in Boston; rooms and general activities.

1873—First Young Women's Christian Association organized in a student center, Normal University, Illinois.

1881—Beginning of work with teen-age girls, Oakland, California. Called "Little Girls' Christian Association."

1884—First country Association organized in Pleasant Valley, Johnson County, Iowa.

1884—State Associations formed in Michigan, Ohio, and Iowa.

1886—First national Association organized—The American Committee—by representatives of middle-western Associations.

1888—First issue of Young Women's Christian Association quarterly called *The Evangel*.

1891—Another national Association organized—the International Board of Young Women's Christian Associations—formed by Associations largely in the east which had been meeting since 1871 in biennial convention.

Appendix

- 1894—World's Young Women's Christian Association organized in London.
- 1894—First secretary sent to foreign field, Miss Agnes Hill to India.
- 1895—Industrial extension work begun in Milwaukee.
- 1898—First county Association organized, Dodge County, Minnesota.
- 1898—First World's conference of Y.W.C.A., London.
- 1902—Second World's conference of Y.W.C.A., Geneva.
- 1903—Industrial work opened in mill villages in South Carolina.
- 1906—Third World's conference of Y.W.C.A., Paris.
- 1906—The two national organizations came together to form one body, The Young Women's Christian Associations of the United States of America. First convention held in December in New York City.
- 1907—First issue of the new official organ of the National Board, *The Association Monthly*.
- 1908—National Training School opened in New York City.
- 1908—First federation of industrial clubs formed in Detroit.
- 1909—Second biennial convention of the national organization, held in St. Paul.
- 1910—International Institute, first work with foreign-speaking women, started in New York City.
- 1910—Fourth World's conference of Y.W.C.A., Berlin.
- 1911—Third biennial convention, held in Indianapolis.
- 1912—New headquarters building for national organization, containing offices and training school, opened at 600 Lexington Avenue, New York City.
- 1913—Fourth biennial convention, held in Richmond, Virginia.
- 1913—National conference grounds opened at Asilomar, California.
- 1914—Fifth World's conference of Y.W.C.A., Stockholm.
- 1915—Fifth biennial convention, held at Los Angeles, California.
- 1915—Headquarters and club house erected by the National Board on the Panama-Pacific International Exposition grounds at San Francisco.
- 1916—The Every-Member Jubilee celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the first American Association.
- 1916—The first summer conference for colored girls held at Atlanta, Georgia.
- 1916—Opening of the Hollywood Studio Club for girls in the motion picture industry.
- 1917—Organization by the National Board of the War Work Council.
- 1917—First conference of International Institutes, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
- 1917—Organization of Overseas Committee of the War Work Council for work in Europe.
- 1918—Conference of one hundred business and professional women—New York City.

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- 1918—Various types of work with adolescent girls in the Young Women's Christian Association brought together into one organization, the Girl Reserve Movement.
- 1919—Meeting in St. Louis to organize the National Federation of Business and Professional Women.
- 1919—First national industrial conference, Washington, D. C.
- 1919—International conference of women physicians, called by the national Young Women's Christian Association and held at the national headquarters, New York City.
- 1919—Work begun in Canal Zone.
- 1920—Sixth biennial convention, held in Cleveland.
Endorsement of the Social Ideals of the Churches.
- 1920—First student assembly, Cleveland, in connection with biennial convention.
- 1921—Dodge Hotel opened in Washington, D. C.
- 1922—Seventh biennial convention, held at Hot Springs, Arkansas.
- 1922—National Student Council organized.
- 1922—First national assembly of industrial girls, Hot Springs, Arkansas.
- 1922—First issue *Womans Press*, national monthly magazine taking the place of *The Association Monthly*.
- 1924—Eighth biennial convention, held at New York City.
- 1924—First national assembly of business and professional women, in connection with biennial convention, New York City.
- 1924—World's Committee meeting of Y.W.C.A. held at Washington.
- 1926—Ninth biennial convention, held at Milwaukee.
- 1926—Opening of new building for Hollywood Studio Club.
- 1928—Tenth biennial convention, held at Sacramento, California.
- 1928—Sixth World's conference of Y.W.C.A., Budapest, Hungary. An industrial girl and a business girl included in official delegates from U.S.A.
- 1930—Eleventh biennial convention, held at Detroit, Michigan.
- 1930—November—National conference held at New York City to consider the emergency created by the unemployment situation, particularly as it affects women.
- 1932—Twelfth biennial convention, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

COMPARATIVE FIGURES OF THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF THE U.S.A. SINCE ITS ORGANIZATION IN 1906

NUMBER OF ASSOCIATIONS:		1906	1916	1921	1926	1931
City, town, and rural		152	284	362	414	452
Student		469	722	767	647	655
Total		621	1,006	1,129	1,061	1,107
Number of branches for colored women & girls..		4	5	56	66	65
Number of International Institutes		—	8	49	45	47
MEMBERSHIP:						
City, town, and rural Associations		144,642	362,191	594,420	486,358	518,892
Student Associations		41,688	59,822	(Est.) 92,000	(Est.) 108,000	(Est.) 100,000
		186,330	422,013	686,420	594,358	618,892
Number of local secretaries		200	1,881	3,466	3,192	3,197
Valuation of real property of local Associations		\$2,974,700	\$12,444,879	—	\$55,000,000	\$79,100,545
Number of volunteers in local Associations...		—	—	—	49,657	62,386
Number of national secretaries		11	129	375	179	164
Number of American secretaries abroad		11	47	248	110	71

SUMMER CONFERENCES

Date	City	Student	Student and City	School Girls	Industrial Girls	Town and Country	Community	Business Girls	Health Education	Business and Industrial Girls	Total Number	Total Attendance
1906	2	3	3								8	3,128
1907	2	3	3								8	3,295
1908	2	4	3								9	3,440
1909	2	4	3								9	3,630
1910	2	4	4								10	3,941
1911	2	3	5								10	3,712
1912	3	3	4	1							11	4,081
1913	3	5	3	—							11	4,130
1914	4	6	2	2	3						17	4,646
1915	5	8	1	2	6	1					23	6,101
1916	5	9	1	2	6	1					24	6,476
1917	5	11	1	3	6	1					27	7,197
1918	5	11	1	2	6	1					26	7,357
1919	6	8	—	13	7	1					35	9,705
					8	1					40	10,067

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